

Solar Scam: How California Turned “Green Energy” Into a Slush Fund for Activism, Rate Hikes, and Tree-Cutting

New report alleges \$900M taken from solar panel program and pumped into Democratic Party voting activism.

Posted by **Leslie Eastman**



Back in the 1980's, when I fled Michigan winters for Southern California, the chief money-making entities were aerospace, oil production, and entertainment.

Sadly, the progressive culture and business-strangling regulatory environment created by activist bureaucrats has pretty much gutted all those profitable endeavors within the state.

Therefore, as the California budget deficit expands, **billionaires flee**, and industries move to other states, fraud is becoming the go-to source of funding those in power who created the environment that is toxic to honest enterprises.

I recently reported that Dr. Mehmet Oz, the head of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), was reviewing the state's use of Medicaid funding. The grift was so flagrant that Oz demanded **California pay back \$1 billion**.

Now, CAL DOGE, California's Department of Government Efficiency initiative led by Republican gubernatorial candidate Steve Hilton, released a report alleging that \$928 million from the Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) program—funded by

gas taxes and electric bills—has been diverted to Democratic voter registration and leftist activism instead of solar installations.

CAL DOGE said that according to SOMAH's latest report they have completed only 269 projects for a total of \$72 million.

Republican gubernatorial candidate Steve Hilton, who has maintained his lead in the race in the latest poll, said he wants to know where the rest of the money went.

...The report lists what CAL DOGE called the partner organizations of SOMAH, who were "double dipping on public funds to provide solar panels on apartment buildings."

It continues: "But actually are building a left-wing activist machine in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods across the state."

\$900M taken from solar panel program and pumped into Dem. voting activism, CAL DOGE claims <https://t.co/25uWUQU9FU> [pic.twitter.com/BhToa9MJgb](https://t.co/25uWUQU9FU)

— New York Post (@nypost) **February 27, 2026**

Meanwhile, the California solar power industry is facing challenges. Changes to the Net Energy Metering Program in 2023 reduced the amount of money solar-power homeowners received for energy they sold back to the **grid by 75%**.

Demand for rooftop solar fell...unexpectedly. And there has been no rebound.

More than 17,000 solar jobs were lost according to CALSSA, with demand falling 80% post-implementation and numerous companies filing for bankruptcy.

The solar market contracted 31% year-over-year in 2024, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA). This decline threatens California's mandate to achieve 100% carbon-free electric energy by 2045, a goal that requires solar energy to account for more than half of that generation.

"We haven't seen a rebound in the market two years after NEM 3.0 went into effect, so we really need to increase the rate of rooftop solar installation," Brad Heavner, executive director of the California Solar & Storage Association (CALSSA), said in an interview with techxplore after the ruling. "Something has to happen and the environment just got even more challenging."

To round out the news describing the total disaster related to California's solar energy programs, there is a proposal for the Coyote Creek Agrivoltaic Ranch solar project in

eastern Sacramento County that is causing much controversy in the impacted community.

There, developers plan to remove about 3,493 mostly blue oak and other native trees across roughly **3,000 acres of oak woodlands**, grasslands, and vernal pools... all in the name of “green energy”.

Many environmental groups oppose the project, along with local Native American tribes, citing the area’s grasslands, protected species and old-growth oak trees.

“I’m here today to voice my opposition to the Coyote Creek solar project. Should it move forward, it would result in irreparable harm and desecration to cultural resources, including village sites, burials, habitat for our plant and animal relatives, as well as the destruction of oak trees so critical to this unique cultural landscape,” said Malissa Tayaba, vice chair of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians.

Gavin Newsom’s California is so committed to saving the environment, they are clearcutting 3,493 mature/old-growth oak trees in native woodlands, grasslands, and vernal pools to make way for 3,000 acres of solar panels pic.twitter.com/InZFwyxG1j
— Kevin Dalton (@TheKevinDalton) **January 14, 2026**

When politicians hide partisan organizing and bloated bureaucracy behind the feel-good language of “green energy,” they don’t promote solar power, but weaponize it by raiding funds slated for installations to use for leftist activism, yanking away promised rooftop savings with mid-stream rule changes, and even clear-cutting native oak woodlands for industrial solar fields.

In conclusion, manipulating people into “going solar” is bad for honest government, bad for families watching every dollar, and bad for the environment itself.