

Times "Utility customers have option of installing rooftop solar systems," by executives from the rooftop solar industry presents a distorted and self-serving view of Arizona's solar industry.

Their claim that Arizona Public Service (APS) is attempting to kill off the solar industry in Arizona by seeking potential changes in the way owners of rooftop solar are compensated for excess power sent back to the grid masks the real issue at hand. The real issue is that the business model used by companies like SolarCity, SunRun and Sungevity to sell prospective customers on installing rooftop solar, is based on cost transfers and subsidies that are heaped on other customers who have not installed, or cannot afford to install rooftop solar facilities.

But rather than engaging in thoughtful discussion and debate about subsidies and the unrecovered fixed costs to provide backup power, power lines and distribution systems to support rooftop solar, the solar companies simply ignore these economic issues and turn to demonizing the local utility

homeowner's house annually on subsidies and unrecovered fixed costs annually onto other customers' electric bills. With approximately 18,000 systems already installed in APS's service territory, the total cost picked up by other customers represents real money and is growing exponentially.

Homeowners with rooftop solar should benefit from the power they produce — both through the savings on their electric bills and through the excess power they provide back to the grid. But they should also pay their fair share of the costs for using APS' facilities for backup power they need and depend on when the sun isn't shining and for access to the power grid. They should also be compensated for any excess power generated and sent back to the grid based upon its actual worth as wholesale power, not at fully loaded retail rates as currently reflected in the net metering mechanism in place today. After all, if the utility, rather than the rooftop solar customer, provides the wires, distribution system and ancillary services to accept, transport and deliver the rooftop

economic and policy perspectives. Subsidies mask proper price signals and cause an uneconomic allocation of resources. And as more customers opt for rooftop solar, an increasing amount of unrecovered fixed costs are transferred onto a decreasing number of non-solar, grid-based customers. This increasing cost burden on non-solar customers makes for poor policy and must ultimately change.

The rooftop solar industry would have us believe the fight over net metering is about freedom of choice for customers — the choice of alternative energy generated by rooftop solar versus getting power from the traditional utility company. The real dispute is not about freedom of choice at all — it's about economics and fairness. It is simply easier for them to paint APS as a villain than defend or change their own unsustainable business model, which is based on subsidies and cost transfers.

— Gary Yaquinto is president & CEO, Arizona Investment Council

Listening, sharing, communicating help tear down walls of stigma

COMMENTARY

RICHARD CLARKE

Reducing stigma requires education and positive associations. That's why it's vital to fight misinformation and prejudice on all levels.

Over the past few years, Magellan and our partners have made extraordinary progress in bringing together mental and physical health care. We have implemented primary care medical services at six of the system's adult clinics and developed an infrastructure of Integrated Health Homes that supports true coordination of care.

At the same time, we have developed health and wellness initiatives that address the whole health of individuals with serious mental illness (SMI). The need for these changes was imperative as individuals

challenged with SMI face dramatically shorter life spans — dying 30 years earlier than those who don't face these challenges. Many have acute co-occurring conditions and, unfortunately, because of the stigma they face, they are reluctant to seek help for behavioral and physical health services.

Integrated Health Homes give us the opportunity to offer both. By bringing together the member, the primary care provider and the mental health care provider, we enable each of them to better understand the full range of issues individuals with mental illness face. Once this happens, we know they will find common ground, understanding and a path forward to a healthier life for the member; and, ultimately, a reduction in the stigma that plagues the illness.

For several years now, Magellan has supported the "One in Four" stigma-

reduction and education campaign in partnership with the Mental Health Awareness Coalition, Family Involvement Center and NAMI Phoenix. The campaign was born out of the fact that one in four Arizonans is affected by mental illness, and one in five children is affected by mental illness.

The successful campaign has in the past shone a light on several extraordinary people, a key component of the campaign that tells real-life stories — ordinary people conquering mental illness and making extraordinary contributions — and their successful recovery journeys. This year we are also introducing healthy heroes — individuals who are working on their whole health recovery — mental, physical and spiritual. We're featuring our "Extraordinary People/Healthy Heroes" on the www.OneinFour.info site as well as on

billboards around the Valley.

We are also proud to present an NPR StoryCorps story of recovery from member Daniel Abril and his aunt and advocate Gloria Abril. Please visit www.MagellanofAZ.com to hear their story.

Listening, sharing, communicating and seeking to understand — these are the keys to tearing down the walls of stigma that prevent healing and recovery. I'm proud that we can enable these "untold stories" to be told. And, I'm proud of the progress we've made transforming Central Arizona's behavioral health care system to an integrated care system over the past nearly six years in order to be a catalyst for this positive change.

— Richard Clarke, Ph.D. is the chief executive officer for Magellan Health Services of Arizona.