

Central Valley Business Times

*April 26, 2012*

Legislation to pry a proposed solar power project out of a jungle of bureaucratic red tape that has ensnared it for the past 14 years is closer to getting through Congress.

The bill would allow the city of Tracy to use property on Schulte Road for a renewable energy project.

The land conveyance bill, sponsored by Rep. Jerry McNerney, D-Pleasanton, has now unanimously passed through the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

“This project will create nearly 200 jobs in San Joaquin County and has been held up by red tape for years. We need to solve this problem because it isn’t a Democratic issue or a Republican issue – it is a common sense issue,” says Mr. McNerney.

The city of Tracy wants to purchase government land on Schulte Road for use as the site of a solar electricity-generation project. The 200-acre property was previously conveyed to the city by Congress with the condition that most of the land be used for recreational or educational purposes. This provision caused the project to be held up for years.

Mr. McNerney’s bill waives any remaining restrictions on the land’s use once it is purchased by the city.

Tracy officials estimate that construction of the project will bring nearly 200 jobs to San Joaquin County.

The Senate version of Mr. McNerney's bill, S. 1302, already passed the Senate. McNerney's bill was originally introduced in the House as H.R. 2406.