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**Abstract Title: A Qualitative Assessment of TPO System Impacts on the Home Sales Process**

Abstract Text:

The use of third party ownership structures to facilitate the sale of rooftop solar PV has expanded rapidly since its introduction in mid-2009. By 2013, third party owned (or "TPO") systems dominated the market, representing over 70% residential installations that occurred during that year. Growth in the TPO market is due in part to the multiple benefits enjoyed by customers, including reduced upfront costs, operation and maintenance coverage provided by the third party owner, and guaranteed performance of the system over its contract life. However, TPO structures may also present challenges, particularly when it comes to selling your home and transferring the liability of a long-term contract to a new owner. In recent months, large media outlets including Bloomberg and NPR have featured stories on PV leases and their impacts on home sales, both in terms of prices and transaction complexity. While these stories are hardly an authoritative assessment, they do raise important questions about the nature of these transactions. Do TPO systems result in an increase in resale value as host owned PV systems do, or a net loss? Is the lease transfer process used in negotiations to the benefit of buyers? How do real estate professionals value TPO systems? Understanding these issues is critical given the enormous size and expansion of the TPO market. This research explores these questions using surveys, interviews, and focus groups with key actors (home buyers, sellers, real estate agents) involved in 130 home transactions in San Diego County where a TPO system was present.