

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Qcells North America and Alton Steel Celebrate Sustainably-Made Steel Partnership**

[ALTON, Ill., Sept. 25, 2023] - Qcells, the largest solar panel manufacturer in North America and leader in complete clean energy solutions, and Alton Steel, a prominent Illinois steel mill represented by the United Steelworkers, today announced a 6.5 MW solar project. This critical clean energy investment marks just the second steel mill in the U.S. to embark on an onsite solar partnership.

Representatives from Qcells and Alton Steel gathered with Illinois elected officials and local leaders to debut two solar arrays that will power 10% of Alton Steel's mill. This investment comes amid widespread calls for clean energy manufacturing solutions and represents a massive shift in the industry towards American-made, low-cost clean energy.

Qcells North America is committed to clean energy innovation and the building of a fully integrated domestic solar supply chain. From engineering, procurement and construction to financing the power purchase agreement, Qcells was hands-on from start to finish to develop this project. According to Wood Mackenzie, an energy research and consultancy firm, Qcells leads the solar industry, holding the No. 1 position in both the U.S. commercial and residential solar market segments.

"We know that making steel requires a significant amount of energy and we know that energy comes at a high cost for our customers and the environment," said Jim Hrusovsky, CEO of Alton Steel. "Sustainability must be a foundation of what we do, which is why we are working towards decarbonizing our process and using renewable sources to power the mill. This solar project is one of the steps Alton Steel is taking towards more sustainable steelmaking."

Steel is well known to be among the most energy-intensive products to make with a large amount of energy coming from fossil fuels. This project, made possible in part by the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), enables Alton Steel to repurpose a former brownfield to operate with domestically produced, clean and affordable power. This partnership validates that solar can play a significant role in powering industrial energy users to cut their costs and reduce emissions.

In addition to Qcells solar panels, Alton Steel produces steel using an electric arc furnace, which generates 75% less carbon emissions than traditional steelmaking. The energy used

in the steelmaking process at Alton Steel relies primarily on electricity. Switching to electricity generated from renewable sources will significantly reduce Alton Steel's carbon emissions.

"Our partnership with Alton Steel truly represents an incredible shift towards low-cost clean energy. The two solar arrays will produce enough energy to power 1,300 homes a year, reducing climate pollution by up to 6,762 metric tons of CO2 equivalent annually," said Qcells' Sustainability Program Development Manager Shannon Geiger-Risdon. "This project - which has only room to grow - is proof that clean energy can power industrial customers."

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Qcells is one of the world's leading clean energy companies, recognized for its established reputation as a manufacturer of high-performance, high-quality solar cells and modules, portfolio of intelligent storage systems, and growing international pipeline of large-scale renewable energy projects. Qcells also provides renewable electricity retail services and packages to end customers the world over. The company is headquartered in Seoul, South Korea (Global Executive HQ) and Thalheim, Germany (Technology & Innovation HQ) with its diverse international manufacturing facilities in the U.S., Malaysia, China, and South Korea. Qcells strives to offer Completely Clean Energy through the full spectrum of photovoltaic products, storage solutions, renewable electricity contracting and large-scale solar power plants. Through its growing global business network spanning Europe, North America, Asia, South America, Africa and the Middle East, Qcells provides excellent services and long-term partnerships to its customers in the utility, commercial, governmental and residential markets. For more information, visit: [www.qcells.com/us](http://www.qcells.com/us).

[Alton Steel Inc.](#), established in 2003, is a Special Bar Quality (SBQ) steel mill producing rounds, round-cornered squares, and bar-in-coil in the heartland of America. Through continued investment for a promising future, Alton Steel offers products at a competitive price with a dedicated focus on great customer service. Alton's current production includes a full range of carbon and alloy grades. Flexible and frequent rolling offers quick response and better inventory control to its customers.