DOCKETED	
Docket Number:	24-OPT-03
Project Title:	Soda Mountain Solar
TN #:	265256
Document Title:	Letter of Support - Assemblyman Tom Lackey
Description:	This document provides a letter of support for the Soda Mountain Solar and Battery Storage Project from California Assemblyman Tom Lackey (CA 34)
Filer:	Hannah Arkin
Organization:	Resolution Environmental
Submitter Role:	Applicant Representative
Submission Date:	8/6/2025 11:27:52 AM
Docketed Date:	8/6/2025

STATE CAPITOL P.O. BOX 942849 SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0034 (916) 319-2034 FAX (916) 319-2134

DISTRICT OFFICE 41301 12TH STREET WEST, SUITE F (661) 267-7636 FAX (661) 267-7736



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LEGISLATIVE ETHICS

August 5, 2025

Mr. Joseph Stout State Director Bureau of Land Management 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W1623 Sacramento, CA 95825

RE: Support for The Soda Mountain Solar and Battery Storage Project

Dear Director Stout:

I am writing to express my support for the Soda Mountain Solar and Battery Storage Project. This project is located in my district in San Bernardino County, approximately six miles southwest of the town of Baker, on 2,670 acres of federal land administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

The proposed project includes a 300 MW solar facility paired with 1,200 MWh of battery storage - enough to power more than 140,000 homes, which equates to roughly one-fifth of all households in San Bernardino County. A project of this scale will help stabilize California's power grid, mitigate extreme energy price volatility, and reduce the risk of rolling blackouts.

I understand that the project was previously approved by federal authorities as a solaronly facility. The current proposal enhances the original plan by incorporating battery storage while also reducing the project's footprint. The revised design places the project adjacent to Interstate 15 and the planned Southern California-to-Las Vegas rail line, thereby significantly limiting its environmental and visual impact. The integration of battery storage and the updated project design has produced a more compact footprint that addresses environmental considerations while enhancing grid benefits for consumers.

Beyond increasing renewable energy capacity and improving grid reliability, this project will provide significant economic benefits to the region. The project will result in much needed infrastructure investment, create hundreds of construction jobs, generate direct annual tax revenue, and contribute ancillary economic effects to my district's surrounding communities.

For these reasons, I am proud to support the Soda Mountain Solar and Battery Storage Project and urge prompt approval of its outstanding actions, which include a Notice to Proceed request, updated plan of development, and environmental review by way of a categorical exclusion.

Sincerely,

Assemblyman Tom Lackey 34th District