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University of San Diego Comments on Existing Incubator Network

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

June 12, 2026

California Energy Commission
Docket Unit, MS-4
Docket No. 25-EPIC-01
715 P Street
Sacramento, California 95814

EPIC Program Team:

Since 2016 the University of San Diego has been a partner organization working with Cleantech San Diego's Southern California Energy Innovation Network (SCEIN) to support regional energy entrepreneurs in San Diego, Imperial, and Riverside Counties. We and our colleagues at the Energy Policy Initiatives Center and Shiley Marcos School of Engineering have provided technical and regulatory and policy services to most of the 82 companies in the program network. These services have included strategic business strategy and formation support; product testing; electrical, mechanical, software engineering support; strategic regulatory, policy, and legislative analysis to support the business models and technology development of these companies.

SCEIN has provided an opportunity for participating companies to perform vital work in the clean energy ecosystem, helping ensure that innovative technologies are vetted, tested, piloted, and cost-effective for all Californians while creating jobs and helping the State achieve the clean energy and climate goals.

The statewide regional energy innovation cluster model has delivered a quantifiable return on investment. In the past ten years, SCEIN alone has generated an 80:1 return on investment, helping 82 clean energy companies that have collectively raised \$727 million in follow-on funding, secured 494 patents, deployed 673 pilots in California, and created 853 full-time jobs. Fundamental to this outcome is the ability to connect startups with utilities, investors, government agencies, labor, and academia. The regional incubator model serves as the critical 'on-ramp' that bring energy innovation from the research and development stage into the market to create a more efficient and thriving clean energy economy

For the last 10 years, SCEIN and the other similar regional energy innovation clusters established with EPIC funds have been highly effective drivers of the EPIC and California's strategic goals. With shrinking and uncertain federal support for clean energy research, development, and demonstration, it is more important than ever that California continues its nationwide leadership in energy innovation by sustaining investment in the proven, regional programs that deliver economic and environmental results.

We were pleased to hear the idea of a pre-commercial incubator raised during the discussion of the several strategic objectives at the June 11th EPIC workshop. Given the impact and effectiveness of the existing energy innovation clusters across the state, it would seem prudent to leverage EPIC's decade of investment in the existing network of energy innovation clusters around the state to support pre-commercial technologies across all strategic objectives, not only a select few. Research funded by EPIC is invaluable, but demonstrating and deploying technologies and facilitating their transition into the market is how energy and climate benefits are realized.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss our experience and the value of regional energy innovation clusters, please feel free to reach out to Scott at 619-260-4589 or scottnders@sandiego.edu, or to Venkat at 619-260-2797 or venkat@sandiego.edu.

Sincerely,



Scott J. Anders
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