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**US Green Building Council (USGBC) comments on the CEC
Building Energy Performance Strategy Report**

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



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August 21, 2026

Chair David Hochschild
California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Docket 24-BPS-01, Draft Building Energy Performance Strategy Report

Dear Chair Hochschild,

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is a nonprofit organization best known for our flagship green building rating system [Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design \(LEED\)](#), which is a nationally recognized standard that takes a holistic approach to whole-building performance. Over 8,000 LEED certified buildings stand in California, making up over 1.4 billion gross square feet. Over 27,000 professionals in California hold LEED credentials, and our member organizations located in California range from professional firms to real estate providers, state and local governments, contractors and buildings, and more.

USGBC appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft *California Building Energy Performance Strategy Report* ("Draft Report") prepared pursuant to SB 48. We support the California Energy Commission's (CEC) recommendation to establish a statewide Building Performance Standard (BPS) that can improve building performance, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support affordability, and advance practical implementation across California's existing building stock.

A statewide BPS is directionally the right policy.

- Extending the state's existing framework into actual performance requirements will address the existing-building stock that codes like Title 24 cannot reach. USGBC agrees with [ACEEE's Draft Report recommendation](#) for a California BPS to have the same coverage as the existing benchmarking policy, and move forward *from there* if the program works well. We also understand that sometimes a "one-size-fits-all" policy only goes so far, and encourage timeline reporting that allows for a shift in rules if buildings within the same category are proven to be categorically different based on its qualities (such as age, design, operating hours, etc.).

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- For local jurisdictions that do not have a BPS policy at this time, we recommend that the CEC support jurisdictions retaining a pathway to adopt *equivalent or more ambition* policies rather than being preempted. One pathway could be to establish policy regulations for a local BPS, as a voluntary measure that local jurisdictions can establish to cover buildings not covered by the statewide BPS, with some flexibility for size thresholds and timelines. We believe that local governments are central to a BPS policy's success, and must be included in every part of the conversation.

Recognizing existing market infrastructure.

- BPS compliance pathways should be easy to understand, and ambitious while still attainable, as other comments have noted.
- We recommend that owners should be allowed to reuse independently verified documentation where it satisfies equivalent California BPS requirements. This includes energy benchmarking, O&M planning, commissioning, energy management, decarbonization planning, metering, and capital planning, while still requiring the building to meet California's actual EUI/GHGI targets.

Handling existing policies.

- A few BPS policies exist across California, while some are currently being established. This is a critical piece to consider, and we encourage the CEC to include local governments at every discussion point prior to every phase the state goes through in its statewide policy creation.
- We also recommend that jurisdictions with existing policies be given guidance and timelines for how to adapt those policies to comply with a new statewide BPS, and to improve consistency for smaller buildings covered by these policies. This support can include providing technical assistance and funding for local resource hubs.
- USGBC a [Strategic Decarbonization Plans](#) fact sheet that is a free resource for local governments. It includes a [Guide to Strategic Decarbonization Planning](#), which was put together by ASHRAE and USGBC, and support from NYSERDA.

Energy efficiency and decarbonization should both matter.



- We recognize that not all buildings aggregate greenhouse gas (GHG) metrics, so using site energy use intensity (EUI) alongside site GHG intensity helps prevent the program from focusing exclusively on either efficiency or electrification.
- USGBC also applauds the report's recognition of load flexibility and peak demand. We recommend load management play a more substantive role, given California's grid needs.
- As noted in other comments, we also believe that the recommendation to ignore on-site renewable energy production is a mistake. We recommend EUI metrics to be based on energy imports from the grid (while ignoring exports to the grid).

Specifics in recommendations.

- Based on previous BPS work across the country, we recommend that the CEC dive into specifics, such as what percentile to set the final targets, how adjustments could be made, which building types represented in the Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS) would be covered, and more.

We appreciate the CEC's leadership, and believe the Draft Report is a great starting point for these discussions. When organized properly, and not rushed, it can help California reach its ambitious decarbonization goals and climate targets. We recommend that the CEC take all comments into sincere consideration when completing its report, and work alongside the new Governor in order to move BPS legislation forward.

Sincerely,

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