

## DOCKETED

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August 11, 2015

Commissioner Robert B. Weisenmiller, Ph.D.  
Chair, California Energy Commission  
1516 Ninth Street, MS-33  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
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Ref: Existing Buildings Energy Efficiency Action Plan

To Chair Robert B. Weisenmiller, Ph.D.:

On behalf of the International Living Future Institute, I am writing to voice our support for the Zero Net Energy criteria of the Existing Buildings Energy Efficiency Action Plan. We would welcome the opportunity to aid the State of California's efforts in moving forward with this critical plan for existing buildings and offer a few suggestions below as you and your fellow Commissioners consider this plan to double energy efficiency in existing buildings.

The International Living Future Institute is an environmental non-profit organization committed to catalyzing the transformation toward communities that are socially just, culturally rich and ecologically restorative. Composed of leading green building experts and thought-leaders, the Institute is premised on the belief that providing a compelling vision for the future is a fundamental requirement for reconciling humanity's relationship with the natural world. The Institute runs the Cascadia Green Building Council as well as an inspirational suite of programs, including Ecotone Press, Declare, JUST, Living Building Challenge, Living Community Challenge and Living Product Challenge. In California, we work with our local partners through research, education and advocacy driven by local Collaboratives and the California Congress. We are proud to work with this distinguished group of practitioners in and around California, including leaders from Integral Group, USGBC California, Thornton Tomasetti, Gensler, SFPUC, City of Palo Alto and others that are inspiring essential policy change.

One such critical change is robust policy support for energy efficiency in existing buildings. We fully support the Commission's intent to achieve demonstrated energy performance in existing buildings. We applaud your efforts to inspire high functioning buildings with the latest technology, thereby drastically reducing energy and water resource use and mitigating

the effects of climate change. We have seen how these essential results can be realized through our global project work.

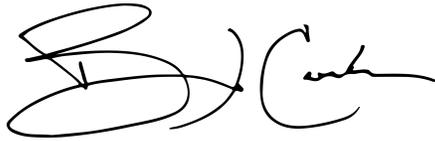
As of August 1<sup>st</sup>, there are 275 projects worldwide, totaling more than 8 million square feet, currently registered for the Living Building Challenge, Net Zero Energy Building Certification and Living Community Challenge. These projects demonstrate how net zero energy buildings can perform at high efficiency, are financially viable and overall enhance California's actions in energy and climate change.

As the Commission finalizes its Existing Buildings Energy Efficiency Action Plan, we offer a few specific comments:

- Performance Benchmarking for Non-Residential Buildings. As a leader in performance-based certification, we encourage the CEC to actively pursue definitions that both meet design and performance requirements for Zero Net Energy outcomes in non-residential buildings. Our Net Zero Energy Building Certification and Reveal Energy Use Label are ideal methods for performance compliance, energy disclosure and industry benchmarking.
- Third Party Certification/Verification. Throughout the document, the importance of third party collaboration is called out, however no verification groups are yet listed. We would like to offer our certification, performance verification and expertise as a possible route for existing buildings to pursue and demonstrate energy efficiency.
- High Performance Workforce Education & Training. The Institute offers a robust educational program on its energy performance requirements along with replicable strategies and technologies used by global project teams. Once again, we would like to offer our assistance, including training to the CEC as it seeks to improve workforce understanding of high performance buildings.
- Local Government Challenge Program. We support the CEC's proposed program as a critical tool for leveraging local policy and market transformation in support of energy efficiency in existing buildings. Working with a vast network of members, practitioners, volunteers and policy makers, the Institute has experience in creating change through municipal, county and statewide policy, and we are excited to partner with CEC in helping to implement this program for efficient and sustainable outcomes.
- Net Zero Energy. As a more general comment, the Institute is eager to bring our energy expertise and project knowledge in support of the CEC as it implements this Action Plan. Through the Living Building Challenge, Living Community Challenge and Net Zero Energy Building programs, we encourage energy efficiency projects to aim for and achieve net zero energy. In so doing, we are inspiring the market to reduce the long-term costs of energy, fossil fuel dependence and Greenhouse Gas emissions in the State of California and beyond.

As green building thought leaders in the market with depth of expertise in zero net energy practices, we would be glad to support the Commission's sustainability efforts and are available to meet with you and your staff to discuss these ideas further. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working more with you in future.

Sincerely,



Brendan Cook  
Net Zero Energy Manager



Stacia Miller  
Global Policy Manager