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Job Quality and Access Comments to the SB 350 Barriers Report Draft

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

September 29, 2016

Alana Mathews
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
VIA E-MAIL

Re: Comments on the draft of the SB 350 Barriers Report - 16-OIR-02

Dear Ms. Mathews:

On behalf of the community, labor and employer organizations below, we respectively submit comments on the SB 350 Barriers Report draft following the September 13 workshop.

While we appreciate the discussion about workforce needs, particularly the section on clean energy job placement and workforce development (pp. 71-72), this issue cuts across the clean energy sector and should not be limited to the chapter on small businesses. The primary goals of California's clean energy programs are to conserve energy and generate renewable energy, but they also serve as a significant source of job generation in the state. California's clean energy programs inevitably affect the number and type of jobs created—impacting both the skills and wages of workers hired by contractors and who gets the jobs. The lack of access for those in disadvantaged and low-income communities to good career-track clean energy jobs represents a significant barrier and without such access California will not fully realize the potential of these programs to serve low-income households and those in disadvantaged communities. Attention to job quality is essential to ensure that government policy and programs support family-sustaining jobs, rather than poverty level jobs with no career ladders.

A job quality and access “roadmap” to ensure well-paying, family-sustaining clean energy job opportunities for residents in low-income and disadvantaged communities is a start. The commissions' efforts should also include:

- **Successful pathways** for residents from low-income and disadvantaged communities in Workforce Education and Training programs consider elements including:¹
 - Extensive recruitment and screening of candidates;
 - Training for soft skills, basic skills, and technical skills;
 - A comprehensive package of services such as case management and career counseling, transportation and child care assistance, etc., that can often be provided through other public funding;
 - Stackable, portable, and industry-recognized certifications and credentials;
 - On-the-job training or other workplace-based learning;
- **Coordination between workforce training programs and job opportunities** for low-income residents or residents from disadvantaged communities. Training alone is not enough. Training programs should have a proven track record of placing disadvantaged workers into career track training and/or jobs. For example, the pre-apprentice/apprentice approach better ensures that once participants graduate from a pre-apprenticeship program, they can then enter an apprenticeship program that provides an ongoing, learn-while-you-earn pathway in which wages rise as skills are acquired.
- **Strong workforce inclusion** in individual agency programs, through requirements, incentives or inducements including policies that account for the needs of workers from disadvantaged communities with components that:

¹ See Workforce Issues and Energy Efficiency Programs: A Plan for California's Utilities, Carol Zabin, Donald Vial Center on Employment in the Green Economy, UC Berkeley, p. 78. <http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/pdf/2014/WET-Plan14.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2016).

- Set disadvantaged/local hire targets for contractors and subcontractors
- Support pre-apprenticeship programs that successfully place workers in state-certified apprenticeship and other programs with a proven track record of placing disadvantaged workers into career track training and jobs
- Create better alignment with the state-certified apprenticeship programs, where relevant and support for California’s main training and education institutions, including community colleges and the state-certified apprenticeship system
- Leverage government and other programs that serve the MUSH (municipal, university, school and hospital) sector, which can model innovations in linking job training and job opportunities for disadvantaged workers.
- **Incorporate contractor and workforce standards** into the program requirements for climate-related programs to help ensure both good-paying jobs and local hire targets for those from disadvantaged communities. This is essential in both the energy efficiency and renewables sector. SB 350 requires the adoption, implementation and enforcement of a responsible contractor policy.² Where feasible, community workforce agreements should be the vehicle for incorporating these standards, as they address *both* labor standards *and* inclusion provisions.

The Commission may also want to review a recent report published by the UC Berkeley Labor Center, *Advancing Equity in California Climate Policy: A New Social Contract for Low-Carbon Transition*.³ Find the Executive Summary of this report attached below. The UC Berkeley report identifies three key principles relevant to equity in clean energy job placement and workforce development, gives examples of strategies and best practices and identifies appropriate metrics:

- Ensure jobs with family-supporting wages, benefits, career paths and safe and healthy working conditions
- Support prevailing wage and skilled workforce standards
- Increase access to career-track jobs for workers from disadvantaged communities.

The above comments are intended to assist the Energy Commission in setting policies and programs that reduce greenhouse gases and related pollutants in ways that promote economic, social, and environmental equity. We thank you for the opportunity to comment and look forward to continued engagement on this issue.

Sincerely,

JB Tengco
West Coast Director
BlueGreen Alliance

Greg Partch
Executive Director
California State Pipe Trades Council

Bernie Kotlier
Executive Director, IBEW/NECA
California Statewide LMCC⁴

Rev. Kirsten Snow Spalding
Executive Director
San Mateo County Union Community Alliance

David Dias
Business Representative
Sheet Metal Workers Local 104

² See Public Resources Code Sec. 25943(a)(3) and (4)

³ <http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/advancing-equity/> (accessed September 29, 2016).

⁴ The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers/National Electrical Contractors Association California and Nevada Statewide Labor Management Cooperation Committee represents over 1,000 electrical contractors who employ over 40,000 electrical workers.