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Docket Number:	17-IEPR-08
Project Title:	Barriers Study Implementation
TN #:	217622
Document Title:	Cypher Comments on 2017 IEPR Joint Agency Workshop on Senate Bill 350 Low Income Barriers Study Implementation
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	Cypher/R. Bong Vergara
Submitter Role:	Public
Submission Date:	5/16/2017 5:24:54 PM
Docketed Date:	5/17/2017

Comment Received From: R. Bong Vergara
Submitted On: 5/16/2017
Docket Number: 17-IEPR-08

Re: Comments on 2017 IEPR Joint Agency Workshop on Senate Bill 350 Low Income Barriers Study Implementation, Docket Number: 17-IEPR-08, Barriers Study Implementation

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

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May 16, 2017

California Energy Commission
Dockets Office, MS-4
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

Dear Chairman Weisenmiller, CEC, and CPUC Commissioners:

Re: Comments on 2017 IEPR Joint Agency Workshop on Senate Bill 350 Low Income Barriers Study Implementation, Docket Number: 17-IEPR-08, Barriers Study Implementation

I write to you on behalf of *Conscious Youth Promoting Health and Environmental Resilience* (CYPHER), a public interest CleanTech incubator for the grassroots in developing and least developed places. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the California Energy Commission's (CEC) and California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) Joint Agency Workshop on SB 350 Low Income Barriers Study Implementation held at the Rosenfeld Hearing Room on May 16, 2017.

My comments are on the following topics: how to measure the impact of proposed regional service centers, and how to link social equity to 'green tech' adoption in low-income communities.

I. Re: 'One-Stop-Shop' Regional Service Centers and Indicator System

In planning the regional 'one-stop-shop' service centers and how to measure their impact in SB 350 implementation, it would be important to:

A). Differentiate indicators from benchmarks. While indicators tell us what is currently going on, benchmarks unify our efforts toward a future target state. Both indicators and benchmarks are critical in measuring success and building a statewide culture of evidence-based, data-driven decision-making.

(1). A set of universal indicators should be considered to assess what is going on in 'green tech' adoption in low-income communities across the state;

(2). Community-defined benchmarks should be considered at the county and municipal levels, and be directly related to broader state- and national-level GhG emission reduction targets; and

(3). Indicators should be geo-coded and available online in the same way census data is available online at the aggregate and census tract levels. Benchmarks should be clearly displayed in an online dashboard, and it should be clear how they are linked to indicators.

B). Ensure that both indicator and benchmark systems directly support climate resilience policymaking. Both indicator and benchmark systems should facilitate climate resilience governance from the standard top-down 'predict & prevent' approach and also from a more 'bottom-up' resilience-building approach premised on local innovation.

> (1). Indicators should facilitate planning and benchmarks should condition investment;

> (2). Indicators should facilitate planning and benchmarks should support and encourage local control of climate resilience; and

> (3). Indicators and benchmarks should facilitate community engagement and mobilization by building resilience at the nexus of regional-scale food, energy, and water systems in order to:
> (a) shore-up hidden vulnerabilities in the infrastructures and resources supporting basic community needs in the era of climate change, and
> (b) address related system overlaps impacting both human and planetary health.

Structuring indicators and benchmarks in this way enables us to empower local communities and non-state actors in tracking and shaping 'green tech' adoption efforts in low-income communities.

II. Re: Linking Social Equity to 'Green Tech' Adoption in Low-Income Communities

Social work is a profession with which the CEC and CPUC could and should work more closely; a framework, in the form of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (AASWSW) Grand Challenges Initiative, now exists to mobilize social work in harnessing technology for social good and creating social innovation in climate change work. CYPHER, in partnership with USC Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, links the Grand Challenges Initiative with the nexus of regional-scale 'food, energy, and water systems' (FEWS) to advance 'green tech' and 'clean energy' adoption as practical tools for social equity.

In promoting 'clean energy' adoption in low-income communities, we should both advance discreet SB 350 policy goals and broader system-change impacts of SB 350 implementation on the basic needs of communities. This could be achieved *by solving social problems where energy and transportation systems overlap with food and water systems*.

A). Outreach and Engagement. Establish an online portal and phone hotline to facilitate education and case management for individuals and households in low-income communities in need of 'clean energy' adoption information and services.

B). Deliverability. We should account for issues of *user experience* in designing interventions to promote 'clean energy' adoption. 'Clean energy' promotion should have a 'no-wrong-door' or 'clean energy across systems' approach; an entry point should be available when addressing food and water system problems, health system problems, as well as, education and workforce investment issues.

C). Local Appropriability. This idea is the extent to which we account for issues of *basic community needs and interests* in designing interventions to promote 'clean energy' adoption. 'Clean energy' promotion should account for the:

> (1) livelihood interests of low-income individuals and households;

> (2) value of 'local and indigenous knowledge systems' (LInKS) in shaping 'grass-root' innovation and engagement; and

> (3) value of a local control framework for climate resilience.

These ideas are from CYPHER's *Barriers & Solutions Report,* which emerged from the CleanTech Forum we held in April 2017, in coordination with CEC, ARB, SGC, GO-Biz, and OPR. A full discussion will be available in the *Barriers & Solutions Report* to be released in June 2017.

I welcome the opportunity to present CYPHER's *Barriers & Solutions Report* and to convene an info-sharing meeting on social equity and 'green tech' with members of the AASWSW and the USC Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Please feel free to contact me for more information on any of my comments by email at rbongvergara@cypher-international.org, or by phone at (714) 914-0305.

Sincerely,

/s/ R. Bong Vergara
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