

DOCKETED

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Comment Received From: Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sacramento
Submitted On: 2/5/2020
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Support for Approval of SMUD's Neighborhood SolarShares Program

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

January 31, 2020



California Energy Commission Docket 19-BSTD-08
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Approval of SMUD's Neighborhood SolarShares Program

Dear Commissioners,

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sacramento is writing to express our support for Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD)'s Neighborhood SolarShares Program and respectfully request that the Commission approve the program at its February Business Meeting. At Habitat for Humanity, we are in favor of creative solutions that makes building housing more affordable.

California is in the midst of an unprecedented housing crisis that requires swift action. That's why Governor Newsom called for 3.5 million new housing units to be built by 2025. Reaching that ambitious goal will require that all options for housing construction be available, including a community solar option like SMUD's SolarShares.

The Commission's adoption of a solar mandate for new low-rise residential dwellings represents a significant change to our state building code. Recognizing that in a state the size of California, one size does not fit all, the Commission worked with stakeholders to provide several compliance options. The community solar option included in the Building Standards was a thoughtful and critical addition, particularly in light of the shortage of affordable housing units across the State.

We write to impress upon you how important the community solar option is to prospective homeowners. The significant additional cost of rooftop systems—which can be \$10,000 to \$15,000—can price many prospective homebuyers out of the market, especially those who have lower incomes and/or live in disadvantaged communities. Unlike rooftop systems, SMUD's Neighborhood SolarShares does not add any additional costs to purchasers—it offers them a guaranteed benefit every year. In addition, SMUD is responsible for maintenance and upkeep of the system, which alleviates the risk that new homeowners could be faced with steep, unexpected repair costs that they may not be able to afford.

At Habitat, we build housing for low and very-low income families. A cost of solar between \$10,000 to \$15,000 could be the breaking point between being able to afford a home, or not.

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sacramento strongly supports SMUD's Neighborhood SolarShares Program. It offers a compliance option that will reduce housing costs, making it easier to build affordable housing units, and it provides a real benefit to customers. We ask that you approve SMUD's program at the Commission's February Business Meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leah Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Leah Miller
President & CEO
Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sacramento