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**CA Labor Federation WED Program Comments on 2020-2023 Plan**

*Additional submitted attachment is included below.*

## **Elevating the High Road in Workforce Training and Development in the 2020-2023 Investment Plan for the Clean Transportation Program**

The California Labor Federation commends the California Energy Commission and the work of their staff in creating this comprehensive investment plan. In addition, we support the CEC's commitment to "ensuring all Californians have an opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and services" from this investment plan. The following comments, questions and suggestions will highlight ways the CEC in partnership with stakeholders from across the State can enhance their commitment to *Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access* through strategic *High Road Training Partnerships*. High Road Training Partnerships are built upon sound 4 principles: 1) Are Industry Driven, 2) Incorporate Worker Voice, 3) Have a Community Focus and 4) Measurable Outcomes. High Road Training Partnerships are partnerships that unite stakeholders around a mission to boost their regional economies. They are a proven means for upskilling an employers' existing workforce and for addressing equity for the community (new workers).

At its core, this investment plan reflects the state's support in the shift of technology towards a more sustainable future for all Californians. In turn, environmental sustainability and economic sustainability must go hand-in-hand. For this sustainable future to become a reality, we must engage workers and the organizations that represent them in the industries highlighted in the Clean Transportation Program Investment Plan.

### **Organized Labor and Worker Voice**

Organized Labor and the inclusion of *Worker Voice* have proven to be critical elements in ensuring equity and inclusion when they are addressed within similar human and capital infrastructure investments like the Clean Transportation Program.

Worker voice plays a key role in the passing of knowledge, skills and education to the future workforce. It has also been important in the acceptance and utilization of new technologies and processes in all sectors.

The best-known form of worker voice is actualized as a part of high performing Labor-Management Training Programs and/or Registered Apprenticeship Programs--created and maintained by Joint Labor-Management Committees. In these joint committees, Labor Unions and their signatory employers work in partnership and collaborate as industry stakeholders to define the training necessary to meet the demand of today and tomorrow. These formalized and state-regulated partnerships not only address the issue of skills needed to meet current and future demand but are designed to provide structured and guided pathways for the next generation into in-demand careers based on industry recognized credentials. It is through the creation of these pathways where organized labor and their industry partners have established equitable opportunities to all Californians.

Shifts in technology and the need to realize significant greenhouse gas reduction, coupled with the need to address equity means worker voice is a critical component in the future of these

endeavors in the greening and skilling of California's industries and workforce. A skilled workforce is required to shape the sustainable future envisioned in this Investment Plan. Fortunately, there are thousands and thousands of union members in California, eager to help apply and expand their skills and experience to meet these demands. We must not forget that these workers and their labor unions have observed, established training and have adapted their skillsets in the face of technological advancement to meet the needs of industry for more than a century. These skill sets are also the pathway for new workers to gain access to the quality jobs we hope to create.

All the sectors highlighted in the Investment Plan, e.g. Public Transportation, Vehicle Manufacturing, Energy Production, Infrastructure Development, Construction and Maintenance, Trucking, Trade/Goods Movement and other aspects of transportation, have a long history of being represented by Labor Unions in California. For decades, Labor Unions in these sectors have collaboratively lifted-up these industries by enabling workers to receive career pathway training, receive family sustaining wages and benefits, while enabling the industry to provide strong workplace protections, a voice on the job.

In the context of this investment plan, we would like to note that Unions, their Employers, Local Educational Partners and other industry stakeholders have long established apprenticeship and training programs or are in process of creating them in many of the industries reflected in the investment.

One great example of how all the above elements combine is the work of California Transit Works. California Transit Works is a partnership of Transit Agencies from across the State, the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), local community colleges and other key stakeholders have been essential to advancing equity, expanding career pathways and addressing climate-related issues. Currently they working to assist Transit agencies and their signatory unions address the needs and steps forward in developing a plan to approach the Innovative Clean Transit Regulation (CARB).

Many transit agencies are not prepared to make the shift in technology and training to go full zero-emissions by 2040. However, California Transit Works is an intermediary based on partnership development and problem solving aimed to meet the 2040 goal by expanding new and innovative training approaches, institutionalizing apprenticeship opportunities and pathways into this heavily unionized sector based on Industry Demand. At its core, California Transit Works operates on the principles mentioned above: 1) Worker Centered; 2) Industry Led; 3) Community Focused; and 4) Metric Based.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1) Expand the Plan's definition and contextualization of Equity, Access, Inclusion and Diversity to the Workforce Training and Development section. Job Quality is an important element in defining equity for instance. If these types of developments are taking place for the benefit of disadvantaged communities, in turn members of these

communities should have opportunities to in participate job training programs that lead to family sustaining careers.

- 2) Invest in Preexisting Registered Apprenticeship Programs and other high road training programs established by Joint Labor Management Partnerships that address carbon reduction, environmental sustainability and are deliberate in closing the opportunity gap.
  - a. These types of investments engage the critical role that organized labor has and continues to play in these industries while lifting up Worker Voice.
- 3) Support and Encourage High Road Procurement Policies. Like what was introduced in the School Bus Replacement Program that ensures Job Quality and rewarding High Road Employers.
- 4) Align with other State Agencies in their Workforce Development Efforts.  
For example, please review the California Workforce Development Board's programs
  - a. High Road Construction Careers funded by Senate Bill 1 (Gas Tax) to support local and regional developments in infrastructure construction and buttressing pre-apprenticeship pathways into in-demand careers
  - b. High Road Training Partnerships funded by Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds to support partnerships in the non-construction trades to build pathways into industries and centers on Equity, Climate Resilience and Job Quality.
- 5) Prioritize High Road Workforce Training and Development that addresses the following elements:
  - a. **Worker Centered:** Workforce Development that does not put workers at the center, runs the risk of being ineffective, lacking substance and in worst case scenarios socially reproducing inequities
  - b. **Industry Led:** Workforce Development should always be based on the current and future needs of Industry
  - c. **Community Focused:** Providing Pathways, Equity and Access to Local Community members into family sustaining careers
  - d. **Metric Based:** Workforce development efforts need to be accountable to funders, but also to the industries and communities they serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important plan. If you have any questions, would like more information or have a further discussion, feel free to contact me.

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