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Filer:	Erica Loza
Organization:	California Energy Commission
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[DATE]

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Ben Hueso
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 7340
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 8120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Imperial County's Lithium Valley Economic Opportunity Investment Plan

Dear Governor Newsom, Senator Hueso and Assemblymember Garcia:

On behalf of the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Lithium Extraction in California, also known as the Lithium Valley Commission, I am writing to share with you our support of elements of the Imperial County's Lithium Valley Economic Opportunity Investment Plan.

Imperial County includes several disadvantaged communities and is one of the poorest counties in the state. We believe many elements of the Lithium Valley Economic Opportunity Investment Plan, among other efforts, enables an efficient, secure and fair development of an industry that has the potential to propel and improve the economic and environmental future of Imperial County residents for generations to come.

In order to ensure we create the environment necessary to realize the massive potential for the County, California, and the nation, we need to be both thoughtful and aggressive in our development of this opportunity. That is why the Imperial County Board of Supervisors has adopted the Lithium Valley Economic Opportunity Investment Plan ("Plan"). This Plan articulates the local, statewide, and national benefits of this endeavor. It also prescribes specific activities we believe are necessary for the County, the State, and the Federal governments to undertake in order to best capitalize on those benefits.

More specifically, we support the following elements the Plan outlines:

- the increase of the County's delegated authority to permit geothermal power plants from 49.9 to 99.9 MWs;
- funding of \$5 million to the County for the creation of a Lithium Valley Specific Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to assist with providing industry with a clear timeline for project delivery;
- funding for a Lithium Valley Development Office for 10 years that will provide direct feedback to the development on project status and shepherd projects through the permitting and planning process;
- support and assistance in the creation of an Imperial County Severance Tax or Resource Levy for critical minerals where the fees would be directed to infrastructure, environmental mitigation, and community enhancements;

- funding for a Cal-Poly campus in Imperial County, or similar higher education campus, or expand current or past efforts to provide the engineers and chemists needed to work in the lithium development sector;
- seed-funding for a reference lab for lithium purity testing at or near mining facilities for quality control purposes;
- annual funding for the period of 5 years for a new Go-Biz Tax Credit for lithium/rare-mineral mining at Lithium Valley

Given the critical nature of this endeavor, we strongly urge you to do everything you can to help Imperial County make these requests a reality. We greatly appreciate your time and attention. If you have any questions please contact Silvia Paz, Chair of the Lithium Valley Commission, at LithiumValleyCommission@energy.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Lithium Valley Commission

cc: Jesus Eduardo Escobar, Chair, Imperial County Board of Supervisors