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September 8, 2023

Via Email Submission

California Energy Commission
Docket Unit, MS-4
Docket No. 23-SB-100
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
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Re: SB 100 Kickoff Workshop, 2025 SB 100 Joint Agency Report

Joint Agencies and Staff:

On behalf of the Coalition of California Utility Employees (CUE),¹ California Unions for Reliable Energy (CURE),² the Western States Council of Sheet Metal Workers,³ and the Joint Committee on Energy and Environmental Policy (JCEEP)⁴

¹ CUE is a coalition of unions whose approximately 43,000 members work at nearly all of California's electric utilities, both publicly and privately owned. CUE's union members build, operate, and maintain utility infrastructure to ensure its safety and reliability. Since 1994, CUE has actively participated in proceedings before the joint agencies to shape state energy and climate policy, including advocating for high road jobs in our state's energy transition.

² CURE is a coalition of labor organizations whose members construct, operate and maintain power plants and other industrial facilities throughout California. CURE has a direct interest in the adoption of policies that ensure California achieves its climate, clean energy and environmental goals. CURE is dedicated to promoting sustainable development that protects workers, provides continued job growth and workforce development opportunities, and minimizes environmental and health and safety impacts.

³ Western States Council of Sheet Metal Workers represents Sheet Metal Workers Local Unions located in the States of California, Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii that are part of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART). SMART is one of North America's most dynamic and diverse unions with 203,000 members. SMART's sheet metal worker members install heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems and are committed to ensuring not just indoor heating and cooling comfort, but also the quality of the air occupants breathe and ensuring that HVAC systems are energy efficient.

⁴ JCEEP is an advocacy organization that represents the California sheet metal workers' local unions and over 25,000 technicians working for over 600 contractors throughout California. JCEEP's mission is to promote responsible environmental and indoor air quality and energy policy in

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thank you for providing an opportunity to comment on the 2025 SB 100 Joint Agency Report Kickoff Workshop. The SB 100 Joint Agency Report will assess various pathways, challenges and opportunities, and costs and benefits of achieving California's goal of 100 percent clean electricity by 2045.⁵ California has made great progress toward a clean energy future. At the beginning of 2023, California had more than 17,500 MW of large-scale solar power capacity, more than 6,200 MW of wind capacity and more than 1,800 MW of geothermal capacity.⁶ But to achieve SB 100's goal, California will have to construct additional clean electricity generation, storage and transmission facilities at record-setting rates.

To be consistent with the state's commitment to a high road transition to economy-wide decarbonization, California agencies should ensure that this massive construction activity improves job quality and access, is equitable and captures the full value of economic benefits for Californians. Accordingly, the SB 100 Joint Agency Report should analyze the effects of different future pathways on creating high quality California jobs and opportunities for historically marginalized workers such as workers of color, immigrants and people involved in the justice system, while providing the skilled workforce needed to meet SB 100's goal. Unfortunately, the topic of high road jobs was notably absent at the Kickoff Workshop.

High road jobs: (1) maximize the environmental and economic benefits of our clean energy investments, (2) increase the safety and reliability of our energy infrastructure, and (3) support family-sustaining wages and benefits and upward mobility for workers, including those living in historically marginalized and disadvantaged communities.⁷

California as it pertains to and impacts the HVAC industry. JCEEP was formed on the premise that air handling systems need to be designed, built and maintained not just to manage comfort levels of indoor air, but also to protect against health threats and to ensure energy efficiency. JCEEP's members have over 15 training facilities throughout the state and thousands of workers being trained daily in HVAC specialties, such as testing, adjusting and balancing, commissioning, green building design, energy efficiency and indoor air quality.

⁵ Pub. Util. Code § 454.53(d)(2).

⁶ California State Profile and Energy Estimates, Analysis, April 20, 2023, available at <https://www.eia.gov/state/analysis.php?sid=CA#:~:text=At%20the%20beginning%20of%202023,more%20than%20any%20other%20state.>

⁷ See Cal. Energy Comm'n, *supra* note 2; Zabin, et al., *Workforce Issues and Energy Efficiency Programs: A Plan for California's Utilities* (2014) at 35, 84, 248, <https://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/pdf/2014/WET-Plan14.pdf>; see generally Zabin, et al., *High-Road Jobs and Climate Action: Lessons from California and the Nation, Low-Carbon Electricity Generation* (2021), <https://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/398-Policy-Brief-Electricity-Generation.pdf>.

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But the energy transition will not automatically generate high road jobs.⁸ It is up to our state to adopt and implement policies that create and promote a market for high-quality labor by, for example, strengthening workforce standards, expanding training and apprenticeship opportunities, and encouraging the use of Community Workforce Agreements.⁹ These practices discourage low-quality, low-wage jobs and pave a high road approach to a sustainable economy and climate.

Indeed, it is the policy of the state to leverage clean energy investments to create high road jobs, which provide training, family-supporting benefits and advancement opportunities for workers across the clean energy economy.¹⁰ California has adopted numerous laws and policies to protect and promote high road jobs in the energy transition.

Executive Order N-19-19, signed by Governor Newsom in 2019, requires “every aspect of state government” to increase efforts to build “a sustainable, inclusive economy.”¹¹ To that end, the order requires \$700 billion in state climate investments to, among other things, “support the creation of high road jobs.”¹² Governor Newsom also endorsed the need for high road strategies in his 2020 Climate Executive Order N-79-20 which stated: “we must accelerate the transition to a carbon neutral future that supports the retention and creation of high-road, high-quality jobs.” The Order posed high road jobs as essential to California’s economic future: “a sustainable and inclusive economic future for California will require retaining and creating high-road, high-quality jobs through sustained engagement with communities, workers and industries.”¹³

Last year, through AB 205 and AB 209, the California legislature enacted prevailing wage and skilled and trained workforce requirements for the opt-in permitting process at the California Energy Commission.¹⁴ Through SB 149, the

⁸ See Zabin, et al., *Workforce Issues and Energy Efficiency Programs: A Plan for California’s Utilities* (2014) at 66; Cal. Energy Comm’n, *supra* note 2 at 122.

⁹ See generally Zabin, *supra* note 4.

¹⁰ See e.g., Cal. Executive Order N-19-19; Cal. Energy Comm’n, 2021 SB 100 Joint Agency Report: Achieving 100 Percent Clean Electricity in California: An Initial Assessment (2021) at 121-22, <https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/EFiling/GetFile.aspx?tn=237167&DocumentContentId=70349>.

¹¹ Cal. Executive Order N-19-19.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ Cal. Executive Order N-79-20.

¹⁴ Public Resources Code § 25545.3.3; Government Code § 63048.93(e).

legislature enacted a skilled and trained workforce requirement for renewable generation and storage seeking streamlined environmental review.¹⁵

The California Air Resources Board also promoted high-road jobs in its 2021 Cap-and-Trade Auction Proceeds Fourth Investment Plan. CARB encouraged agencies to “direct funding towards high-quality jobs and high road workforce development” by incorporating “job quality and job access measures (e.g., standards, requirements, and targets) across more investment types, prioritizing investment types that directly support or create jobs.”¹⁶

The CPUC also committed to promoting high road jobs. In its Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Action Plan, the agency set a goal to “promote high road career paths and economic opportunity for residents in ESJ communities.”¹⁷ The Commission explicitly recognized “the need to leverage its authority and jurisdiction to focus on the jobs created or supported by CPUC policies, as well as the training and services needed to develop a skilled and diverse workforce, addressing issues of quality and access on both fronts.”¹⁸

The California Workforce Development Board, in its June 2020 Jobs and Climate Action Plan for 2030, identified three key factors that state policymakers should take into account when implementing climate policies and programs. First, labor should be considered an investment rather than a cost, and investments in growing, diversifying and upskilling California’s workforce can positively affect returns on climate mitigation efforts. Second, California can achieve greater social equity in labor market outcomes for disadvantaged workers in communities when policymakers pay attention to job quality. Identifying high-quality careers (i.e., ones that offer family-supporting wages, employer-provided benefits, worker voice and opportunities for advancement) first, and then building pathways up and into such careers, is critical to ensuring that investments in workforce education and training meaningfully improve workers’ economic mobility. Finally, deliberate policy interventions are necessary to advance job quality and social equity as California transitions to a carbon neutral economy, just as efforts are required to reduce

¹⁵ Public Resources Code § 21183.

¹⁶ CARB, *Cap-and-Trade Auction Proceeds Fourth Investment Plan*, Fiscal Years 2022-23 through 2024-25, p. v.

¹⁷ CPUC, *Environmental & Social Justice Action Plan Version 2.0* (2022) at 21, <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/news-and-outreach/documents/news-office/key-issues/esj/esj-action-plan-v2jw.pdf>.

¹⁸ *Id.*, p. 21.

pollution, protect human and environmental health and to safeguard communities from an already-changing climate.¹⁹

Together, the CPUC and CWDB promoted environmental and social justice through workforce development. They signed a Memorandum of Understanding which aims to:

ensure the state has the workforce and industry-based training partnerships necessary to meet its clean energy and clean transportation goals, while building pathways into the middle class and beyond for Californians who have been historically excluded from opportunity or shouldered a disproportionate share of climate and environmental costs.²⁰

The 2021 SB 100 Joint Agency Report makes similar pronouncements and suggests that future iterations of the report would analyze job creation.²¹ It said:

SB 100 presents a significant opportunity for job creation and sustainable careers because of the expected record-setting resource build. While this report does not contain an analysis of local economic impacts or benefits, nor job creation associated with SB 100 implementation, ***these topics will be explored quantitatively and qualitatively in future SB 100 work.***²²

Despite the state's clear and repeated policy to promote high road jobs in its energy transition and the Joint Agencies' promise to analyze the benefits of job creation in its SB 100 work, the SB 100 Kickoff Workshop and supporting materials do not mention job creation or high road jobs. To be consistent with state policy, in the 2025 SB 100 Report, the Joint Agencies should fulfill their commitment to analyze job creation associated with meeting SB 100's goal. Similar analysis has been done before.²³

¹⁹ C. Zabin, *Putting California on the High Road: A Jobs and Climate Action Plan for 2030*, University of California, Berkeley, Center for Labor Research and Education, June 2020.

²⁰ CPUC & CWDB, *Memorandum of Understanding Between the California Public Utilities Commission and the California Workforce Development Board on Workforce Development for Environmental and Social Justice* (Sept. 14, 2020) at 1.

²¹ See Cal. Energy Comm'n, *supra* note 2 at 122.

²² Cal. Energy Comm'n, *supra* note 2 at 121 (emphasis added).

²³ B. Jones, P. Philips and C. Zabin, *Job Impacts of California's Existing and Proposed Renewables Portfolio Standard*, University of California, Berkeley, Donald Vial Center on Employment in the Green Economy, August 28, 2015.

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Specifically, when the Joint Agencies analyze various pathways to achieving a 100 percent clean energy electric system, they should include analysis of the number and quality of California jobs created by each pathway, as well as policies that would maximize those benefits.

We look forward to working with the Joint Agencies to develop this analysis so that California maximizes the economic and social benefits of its clean energy investments.

Sincerely,



Darion Johnston

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