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California Zero Emission Vehicle Battery Manufacturing Block Grant Program

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



September 18, 2023
Chair David Hochschild
California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: California Zero Emission Vehicle Battery Manufacturing Block Grant Program

Dear Chair Hochschild,

On behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and the NRDC Action Fund, we write to urge the California Energy Commission to voluntarily adopt the standards laid out in SB 322 (Becker) and to give priority to applicants for the ZEV Battery Manufacturing Block Grant that adhere to these standards. By voluntarily adopting these standards, the Energy Commission can ensure a just and equitable battery manufacturing industry in California that creates high-quality jobs.

California leads the nation in implementing policies to zero-out pollution from the transportation sector, the state's largest source of climate pollution and a major contributor to air pollution that disproportionately harms environmental justice and low-income communities. The transition to electric vehicles powered by advanced battery systems will be the primary path for the state to meet the goals in SB 350 as well as requirements under California Air Resources Board's Advanced Clean Trucks and Advanced Clean Cars II standards. The state has a unique opportunity to grow battery manufacturing and create high-quality jobs within this new sector, as well as to attract a portion of the historic federal investments for domestic EV manufacturing under the Inflation Reduction Act.

NRDC strongly believes that delivering on a clean energy economy should go together with creating high-quality jobs and ensuring equitable outcomes for workers and communities. SB 322 provides the best list of high road workforce standards and job quality standards including living wages, training programs and job quality, health and safety compliance, compliance with labor law, and labor peace. These standards will simultaneously support business development and workers in underserved communities with stable jobs and living wages as California leads the just and equitable transition to the green economy.

For these reasons, the Energy Commission should implement the workforce and job quality standards in SB 322.

Sincerely,

Jordan Brinn
Clean Vehicles & Infrastructure Advocate,
Clean Vehicles & Fuels Group

Linda Escalante
SoCal Legislative Director
Natural Resources Defense Council

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL