

DOCKETED

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Integrating Job Quality and Training Commitments from Applicants

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



September 18, 2023

Chair David Hochschild
Zero Emissions Vehicle Block Grant Program
California Energy Commission
Docket No. 23-TRAN-03
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

**Re: Comment on California Zero Emission Vehicle Battery
Manufacturing Block Grant Program**

Dear Chair Hochschild,

At Jobs to Move America we have worked alongside public agencies, community groups, environmental organizations and labor to ensure that public contracts intended to advance vehicle and transit electrification, and other climate investments, also advance opportunities and earnings for working families in California. We write to you today to share our recommendations for how the California Energy Commission can take meaningful steps towards supporting family-sustaining, equitable, and high road jobs through the PowerForward Program.

As we invest taxpayer funds into the ZEV battery manufacturing sector, it is imperative that we include policies that promote high road jobs for the workers who manufacture these vehicles. Many workers, including those in the clean energy sector, face significant barriers to accessing quality jobs, and far too many manufacturing jobs remain low-road with insufficient pay, benefits, and treatment. With the right policies in place, the PowerForward grants can play a critical role in changing this status quo.

In particular, we recommend that the CEC build job creation and quality criteria into the scoring process for the ZEV battery manufacturing solicitation. Innovative contracting tools, like the **U.S. Employment Plan**, require bidders to submit information that allows the CEC to evaluate job quality metrics like wages, benefits, and

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investments in training programs, hiring initiatives or partnerships with community groups and labor organizations. As part of the contracting process, bidders should be required to provide the following information as part of their bid proposal:

- **Information on job creation:** A list of the job classifications and location where the work will be performed, the proposed minimum hourly wage for each job classification, proposed minimum hourly fringe benefit amount for each job classification, description of each type and category of benefit provided, and description of methodology used to calculate the minimum hourly amount of fringe benefits.
- **Recruitment and training for targeted workers:** The plan for recruiting, hiring, and training workers who face multiple and significant barriers to employment, or workers who are typically underrepresented in the manufacturing workforce. Examples of targeted hiring include women, people of color, veterans, and formerly incarcerated individuals. The plan may include proposed coordination or partnerships with workforce development organizations, community-based organizations, labor organizations, worker centers, faith-based organizations, or other service providers, and any proposed support to ensure the retention of Disadvantaged Workers such as case management services, childcare support, transportation assistance, food insecurity support, access to dental or medical care, or access to mental health resources.
- **Workforce training programs:** Including the minimum dollar commitment for training within US boundaries, skills & credentials attained, proposals for public or private workforce development programs and/or registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship programs.

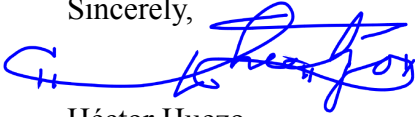
Including these items in the bidding and scoring process is an important way to maximize the impact of PowerForward for workers and communities. And, by making these commitments enforceable parts of the final contract, the CEC can hold manufacturers accountable to the promises they make. More information on how to public agencies can support a maximum amount of job creation from their programs and investments can be found at:

<https://jobstomoveamerica.org/resource/u-s-employment-plan-2/>.

In addition to the U.S. Employment Plan, we encourage the CEC to focus the program design on building out the ZEV battery industry. To this end we recommend that the program prioritize larger grants that can support manufacturing projects rather than a larger number of smaller grants. We also support the expansion of the program from \$25 million to \$100 million in funding. The transition to electric vehicles is happening rapidly, and we must meet this moment with adequate investments.

As we distribute millions of dollars in federal and state funding to companies, it is crucial that we entrench a robust system of high road job standards and procedures into how we do business as a state. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the PowerForward program. We look forward to partnering with you to create high road jobs in California's emerging ZEV battery industry.

Sincerely,



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