

## DOCKETED

<b>Docket Number:</b>	16-OIR-02
<b>Project Title:</b>	SB 350 Barriers Report
<b>TN #:</b>	212859
<b>Document Title:</b>	I.B.E.W./Johnny Simpson Comments: On 8/12/16 Workshop on Barriers of Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities
<b>Description:</b>	N/A
<b>Filer:</b>	System
<b>Organization:</b>	I.B.E.W./Johnny Simpson
<b>Submitter Role:</b>	Public
<b>Submission Date:</b>	8/18/2016 4:17:51 PM
<b>Docketed Date:</b>	8/18/2016

*Comment Received From: I.B.E.W./Johnny Simpson*

*Submitted On: 8/18/2016*

*Docket Number: 16-OIR-02*

**On 8/12/16 Workshop on Barriers of Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities**

*Additional submitted attachment is included below.*

Johnny SIMPSON  
I.B.E.W.

## **SB350 and Disadvantaged Communities**

### **RENEWABLES: CASE STUDY FROM IMPERIAL COUNTY**

- Imperial County is one of the most disadvantaged communities in California, if not the nation. It has some of the highest unemployment, terrible air quality and is largely a Latino, working class community.
- When the 33% RPS was passed, we saw a rush of projects proposed in Imperial which has tremendous renewable energy resources.
- Local 569 decided early on to make sure local people in the community were first-in-line to benefit from these projects, particularly going to work building these projects and making sure these were good jobs.
- We invested in organizing, political and legal resources to make sure projects were bound by Project Labor Agreements with a local hire component so Imperial County residents were first-in-line for these jobs.
- IBEW 569 operates the only state-certified electrical apprenticeship facility for construction in Imperial County so we were able to provide local residents with skilled electrical training.
- Have now built over 1,400 MW of renewable energy in Imperial County and throughout the construction process, our local hiring ranged from 65 – 90% County residents.
- We expanded from roughly 50 members in Imperial County to over 900 IBEW members at the height of construction.
- We were training so many people we had to rent out an empty elementary school and hire additional Instructors and a Training Director to keep up with all of our classes.

- The workers building these projects worked in very harsh conditions like heat over 100 degrees - backbreaking difficult work.
- Because these were union projects, workers earned a good living, had healthcare for themselves and their family and dental care and were enrolled in our union training program, where they were learning skills in the classroom and on the job.
- We tripled the amount of people enrolled in our electrical apprenticeship which is a 5-year training where students “earn while you learn” – paid with healthcare benefits, pension retirement contribution, college credits and a pathway toward becoming a Journeyman Wireman in the IBEW who can work anywhere in the country.
- Today we have 68 apprentices in Imperial County on their way to a better future because of California’s RPS policies.
- To summarize: the elements to create access and opportunity for local residents in this struggling community included 1) state RPS targets which are now thankfully expanded under SB350; 2) union agreements mandating local hire to target community residents and 3) linking projects with union wages, training and benefits to provide upward mobility for workers in these green industries.

## **ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

- As we know, SB350 also has historic energy efficiency targets. As we expand energy efficiency, this industry must do better to link disadvantaged communities with middle-class careers and make sure it is actually creating good jobs and upward mobility.

- Utilities receive roughly \$1 Billion each year for energy efficiency improvements.
- In 2014, UC Berkeley released a report called “*Workforce issues and Energy Efficiency Programs: A Plan for California’s Utilities*” with specific recommendations for utilities to build workforce and skilled training standards into energy efficiency programs and to expand access to workers in disadvantaged communities.
- This report is the product of detailed research and broad stakeholder outreach.
- IBEW stands behind these recommendations and is working in a coalition with environmental and environmental justice partners like the Sierra Club and Greenlining Institute urging state agencies to require utilities to adopt these policies.
- We need a diverse, qualified workforce if we are going to achieve the targets in SB350 and do it in a way that is equitable and lifts up working families. This report provides the road map.