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Katherine Garcia, SCC Investment Plan Update Comments

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



July 6, 2020

Docket: 19-ALT-01
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: 2020-2023 Clean Transportation Program Investment Plan Update

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

On behalf of Sierra Club California and its 500,000 members and supporters in California, I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the Lead Commissioner Report for the Clean Transportation Program 2020-2023 Investment Plan Update.

These are unprecedented, challenging times. We are currently experiencing a pandemic and an economic crisis spurred by COVID-19. And to avoid the worst impacts of the climate crisis, the 2020s must be the decade of urgent climate action. We urge the California Energy Commission to maximize investments by prioritizing equity, spurring economic development and accelerating the transition to zero-emission technologies.

I. Maximize investments in low-income and disadvantaged communities

Given that residents of low-income and disadvantaged communities are disproportionately burdened by harmful pollution impacts from the transportation sector, it's critical that the Clean Transportation Program's investments direct sufficient resources to these communities. For far too long, these residents have been hardest hit by transportation emissions, and research has shown that COVID-19 deaths increased among those with long-term exposure to air pollution from sources like diesel engines.

Sierra Club California asks that 50 percent of the funding be spent within low-income and disadvantaged communities. This is consistent with the version of the investment plan we discussed in March. Several Advisory Committee members also made this recommendation during our recent meeting in June.

II. Focus on strategic investments that yield family-sustaining jobs

Sierra Club recently published the report *Millions of Good Jobs: A Plan for Economic Renewal*, which outlines how smart investments across key sectors can yield 9 million family-sustaining

jobs every year for the next 10 years.¹ This economic renewal plan is designed to help address our public health crisis, joblessness, inequity and climate change simultaneously.

According to the report, the U.S. can create 1 million good jobs per year nationally by investing in clean transportation. While the scope of this job creation estimate is not specific to California, it includes recommendations that are aligned with our state's priorities. For instance:

- Reducing the cost of electric vehicles, particularly for lower-income families to make electric vehicles more affordable;
- Funding charging infrastructure to ensure a robust network that supports our expanding fleet of electric vehicles;
- Providing incentives for electric vehicle manufacturing companies, which will support good local jobs;
- Investing in bikeable and walkable communities that promote safety and accessible mobility.

California is a hub for electric vehicle and charging infrastructure manufacturing companies and our state has already shown strong leadership in these key areas. This analysis is important and timely because it exemplifies the connection between strategic funding and workforce development.

III. Accelerate the transition to zero-emission vehicle adoption

Sierra Club California supports the Clean Transportation Program's focus on the near-term benefits of zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure. By accelerating the transition to ZEV adoption, California can effectively reduce criteria air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector. Now more than ever, we urge the CEC to take aggressive action toward meeting our air quality and climate goals. Now is the time to prioritize zero-emission technologies over polluting fuels.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Investment Plan Update for the Clean Transportation Program.

Sincerely,



Katherine Garcia
Communications Associate and Policy Advocate

¹ Beachy, Ben. Millions of Good Jobs: A Plan for Economic Renewal, May 2020.
<http://www.sierraclub.org/economic-renewal>.