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CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION
LITHIUM VALLEY COMMISSION

In the matter of,)
)
)
Lithium Valley) Docket No. 20-LITHIUM-01
Commission Meeting)

IN PERSON AND REMOTE VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

Primary Physical Location:
Calipatria High School Library
601 W. Main Street,
Calipatria, CA 92233

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2022

1:30 P.M.

Reported By:
Elise Hicks

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Reporter's Certificate

Transcriber's Certificate

1

P R O C E E D I N G S

2 August 25, 2022

1:35 P.M.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Hi everyone, bienvenidos. Welcome
4 to the Lithium Commission meeting. Today we are meeting
5 both in person and via Zoom. And if you cannot hear me
6 in the back let me know I tend to quiet down sometimes.

7 As mentioned, during the last meeting with the
8 adoption of Assembly Bill 189, which was signed by the
9 governor on June 30th, the Commissioners and members of
10 the public can attend and participate in meetings
11 remotely. We have one physical location here at
12 Calipatria High School. So, I do want to thank the
13 Calipatria Unified School District for continuing to
14 provide the location, appreciate it.

15 We are providing interpretation services in
16 Spanish for attendees at the physical locations, and
17 those participating through Zoom on computers or
18 tablets. Unfortunately, the Zoom interpretation
19 function does not work for attendees who are only
20 joining by phone. And I think so. Anybody who needs --
21 si hay alguien que preuba interpretacion aqui, aca
22 tenemos a los interpretors. Los pueden dejar sabe.

23 But now Erica Loza from the Energy Commission
24 will speak in Spanish to inform our Spanish speaking
25 audience on how to use the Zoom interpretation service.

1 MS. LOZA: Saludos. Me llamo Erica Loza
2 Daré instrucciones a aquellos de ustedes que
3 quieran escuchar la reunión en español. Hay un
4 intérprete disponible a través de la plataforma Zoom.

5 Para unirse al canal en español, haga clic en
6 el ícono del globo pequeño en la parte inferior de su
7 aplicación Zoom. Seleccione el canal donde dice S-p-a-n-
8 i-s-h. Luego haga clic en la frase siguiente donde dice
9 "Mute Original Audio" para silenciar el audio original.

10 Si tiene preguntas o si gusta hacer algún
11 comentario, favor de oprimir el ícono de la mano alzada
12 y abierta o envíenos un mensaje en español a través de
13 la función de preguntas y respuestas para ayudarle.

14 Back you you, Chair Paz.

15 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. To ensure that all
16 members of the public have access to the meeting under
17 the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, we ask that all
18 Lithium Valley Commissioners connected via
19 teleconference select and remain on the English Channel
20 for the entirety of the meeting, preferably with cameras
21 on. Now, the staff from the Energy Commission will
22 review some general instructions.

23 MS. LOZA: This is a hybrid meeting being
24 conducted with a physical location and via
25 teleconference. This meeting is being recorded as well

1 as transcribed by a court reporter. The transcript will
2 be posted to the docket. The recording of the meeting
3 will be available on the Lithium Valley Commission
4 webpage. The Spanish interpretation will not be
5 recorded or transcribed.

6 Members of the public connected via
7 teleconference will be muted during the presentation,
8 but there will be opportunities for public comment at
9 times throughout the meeting. For public commenters, we
10 will ask you to state and spell your name and state your
11 affiliation, if any, when speaking. However, state law
12 permits you to remain anonymous. So, providing your
13 name and affiliation is voluntary.

14 There is a Q&A window in the Zoom application
15 in which you can use to type questions and comments, and
16 Staff will relay these comments as appropriate. For any
17 comments made in Spanish, the interpreter will render
18 those comments into English for the non-Spanish-speaking
19 participants to ensure those comments are included in
20 the record and transcript.

21 The presentation materials from this meeting
22 will be made available through the docket in English and
23 Spanish versions after the meeting. Please note that
24 the Spanish version may post a few days after the
25 English version.

1 Next slide, please.

2 Public comments can be submitted at any time
3 through the e-commenting system accessed through the
4 Lithium Valley Commission webpage. For more information
5 on the Lithium Valley Commission, you can access the
6 website as shown here. You can also review all
7 materials submitted to the docket at the link provided
8 below the website address, which can be found on the
9 webpage as well.

10 Back to you Chair Paz.

11 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Let's move on to roll
12 call. And if the Energy Commission please assist us on
13 calling the role of Commissioners. Remote participants
14 no longer need to state your location as we had to in
15 prior meetings. So, Energy Commission Staff?

16 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Castaneda?

17 COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: Here.

18 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Colwell?

19 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Present.

20 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Dolega?

21 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: Present.

22 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Flores?

23 COMMISSIONER FLORES: Present.

24 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Hanks?

25 COMMISSIONER HANKS: Present.

1 MS. LOZA: Vice Chair Kelley?

2 Commissioner Lopez?

3 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Present.

4 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Olmedo?

5 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Present.

6 MS. LOZA: Chair Paz? Oh, Olmedo?

7 Commissioner Olmedo?

8 CHAIR PAZ: Yes, he stated present.

9 MS. LOZA: Thank you. Chair Paz?

10 CHAIR PAZ: Present.

11 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Reynolds?

12 Commissioner Ruiz?

13 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Present.

14 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Scott?

15 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Present.

16 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Soto?

17 Commissioner Weisgall?

18 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Present.

19 MS. LOZA: Okay. We have 10 Commissioners
20 present.

21 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, we have quorum.

22 So, if we can go to the next slide, please.

23 The agenda for today's meeting is shown on the
24 slide. Today's meeting is a little bit different from
25 past meetings. We do not have technical workshops.

1 Instead, we will center the majority of the conversation
2 on the schedule and the public process around the Blue-
3 Ribbon Commission's report to the legislature.

4 We will also discuss our future meetings. In
5 addition, we will have updates on select provisions of
6 the enacted 2022-2023 California State Budget, and
7 status of the Energy Commission's Rulemaking Proceedings
8 that amend existing Commission regulations for two
9 purposes. One, streamlining the Energy Commission's
10 existing process for delegating its permitting authority
11 for general -- for geothermal power plants to counties
12 with an equivalent certification program. And two,
13 streamlining the Energy Commission's existing process
14 for approving small power plant exemptions.

15 Also, over the last several months, Energy
16 Commission Staff have been working on compiling the
17 information we've received in our public proceedings and
18 docket to develop a draft report for our consideration.

19 I initially asked for a potential discussion of the
20 report to be placed on today's agenda to provide the
21 Blue-Ribbon Commission the opportunity to discuss it if
22 it was made available prior to today's meeting.

23 Energy Commission Staff anticipate that it
24 will be released next week. Many of you likely saw the
25 amended agenda that was posted early this week. I asked

1 the Energy Commission to remove the discussion of the
2 report from the agenda item in advance of today's
3 meeting to keep all of you and interested stakeholders
4 informed. So, as I mentioned, the Energy Commission
5 Staff is working on the report, on the Draft Report, and
6 it will be released shortly.

7 The Draft Report will be translated into
8 Spanish. However, due to the time that translation
9 takes, it will not be possible to release both of them
10 at the same time. So, the English version is going to
11 be released first, and shortly afterwards we would be
12 expecting a Spanish translation of that draft.

13 Next slide, please.

14 So, under administrative items, we have two
15 meeting action minutes that require approval. They have
16 been made available for review to the Commissioners and
17 to the public through the docket, and are available in
18 hard copy or through the QR code at each physical
19 location. We will go to public comment on these
20 administrative items before we come back to Commissioner
21 discussion and motion.

22 So, next slide, please.

23 We will open the floor to any public comments
24 relating to the identified meeting action minutes. If
25 you are in Calipatria, you can please proceed to the

1 podium. And to those who are not able to, please raise
2 your hand and we will bring a microphone to you. If you
3 don't wish to remain anonymous, please spell your name
4 and state your affiliation.

5 So, anyone here in Calipatria? I don't see
6 any hands raised in Calipatria. We will now move to
7 people participating through Zoom.

8 MS. LOZA: Okay. If you're joining via Zoom
9 on the computer, please use the raise-hand feature. If
10 you've called in, please dial star-nine to raise your
11 hand, and start-six to unmute your phone line.

12 So, first hand raised is Shan, you should be
13 able to unmute.

14 MS. GARCIA: Hello, Commission. My name is
15 Shan Garcia and I'm present today in support of the
16 communities surrounding the Salton Sea and their
17 concerns about the future of lithium extraction. I'm
18 not sure if I'm correct here in my understanding, but
19 from my understanding, the public's kind of only being
20 given a very limited amount of time to review these
21 recommendations. And I believe it's something like 15
22 days, and I just -- I just need to express how unfair
23 that is and that more time is needed. Especially not
24 just to review, but to have more opportunities like this
25 to speak. Because frankly, you know, on a 1:30 P.M. on

1 a Thursday is just so inaccessible to most people.

2 And second, I just want to express my own
3 concerns with lithium extraction as a resident of the
4 overall surrounding communities. And I really implore
5 everyone really to look at the long-term impacts that
6 these decisions that are being made right now are going
7 to have long-term. Not just the short-term monetary
8 benefit that they bring in short-term.

9 Lithium extraction uses a ton of energy and
10 chemicals and produces a ton of carbon dioxide. But it
11 does provide an alternative for decarbonizing
12 transportation, you know. But the thing is, there's so
13 many other alternatives to lithium. And when it comes
14 to its environmental impact, I just -- personally, I
15 don't think it's worth the long-term investment. You
16 know, it costs more to recycle a lithium battery than it
17 does to make one. So only something like five percent
18 of them are actually getting recycled, the rest are just
19 going to waste. They're producing waste, and they're
20 being needed to use a lot more energy to be produced.

21 So, the part that really concerns me too is
22 the impact on the soil that it has. You know, the
23 Coachella Valley is already an area that's suffering
24 greatly from air pollution. And it's also an area with
25 a lot of active farms. And when it comes to soil,

1 lithium is just a leach. And we're doing that on prime
2 farmland that supplies the whole nation. Thank you.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you for your comments.

4 MS. LOZA: Thank you. So, those are all the
5 online.

6 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Erica.

7 Considering the minutes, I don't know if
8 there's any discussion from my colleagues here regarding
9 the adoption of the minutes. I will need a motion so
10 that we can adopt them.

11 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: So moved.

12 COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: So moved.

13 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. I think there was a
14 motion by Jonathan Weisgall. Did I hear somebody else?

15 COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: I moved, but I'll
16 second. That's fine.

17 CHAIR PAZ: A motion and a second by Jonathan
18 Weisgall and Steve Castaneda. Any discussion?

19 I don't see any discussion from the
20 Commissioners here in Calipatria, is there any
21 discussion from the Commissioners joining us via Zoom?

22 Roll call please.

23 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Castaneda?

24 COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: Yes.

25 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Colwell?

1 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Present.

2 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Dolega?

3 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: Yes.

4 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Flores?

5 COMMISSIONER FLORES: Present.

6 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Hanks?

7 COMMISSIONER HANKS: Yes.

8 MS. LOZA: Vice Chair Kelley?

9 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: Yes.

10 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Lopez?

11 Commissioner Olmedo?

12 Chair Paz?

13 CHAIR PAZ: Yes.

14 MS. LOZA: Chair Reynolds?

15 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Yes.

16 CHAIR PAZ: To clarify, that was Commissioner
17 Olmedo. His response just came a little bit late.

18 MS. LOZA: Thank you. Commissioner Ruiz?

19 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes.

20 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Scott?

21 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Abstain.

22 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Soto?

23 Commissioner Weisgall?

24 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Yes.

25 MS. LOZA: Okay, I have eight yeses.

1 CHAIR PAZ: Erica, do we need to confirm that
2 those present responses were yes responses? I
3 (INDISCERNIBLE).

4 MS. LOZA: Yes, can I get Deborah to answer
5 that one?

6 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Yes.

7 MS. DYER: Yes. We should go back through and
8 see who we don't have a vote for and just call them
9 again, please, Erica.

10 MS. LOZA: Okay. Okay, so, Commissioner
11 Castaneda?

12 Commissioner Castaneda?

13 CHAIR PAZ: Flores and Commissioner Colwell.
14 And Commissioner Colwell just stated the yes, but I'll
15 ask him if he can restate it.

16 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Yes.

17 CHAIR PAZ: So that was one, and the other one
18 is Commissioner Flores.

19 COMMISSIONER FLORES: Yes.

20 MS. LOZA: Okay. So, now we have 10.

21 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

22 MS. LOZA: Thank you.

23 CHAIR PAZ: And the motion passes.

24 Next slide, please.

25 So, for this section, Energy Commission staff

1 will provide an update on select provisions of the
2 enacted 2022-2023 state budget. As an introduction, on
3 June 27th, the governor signed the 2022 Budget Bill and
4 various pieces of related legislation that were passed
5 by the legislature, to implement the budget for the
6 2022-2023 fiscal year. The budget includes funds for
7 lithium development and a statutory framework for local
8 governments, residents, and disadvantaged communities to
9 benefit from the development and extraction of lithium
10 in Imperial County. Deanna Carrillo will provide the
11 update on behalf of the Energy Commission. Deanna?

12 Thank you.

13 MS. CARRILLO: Thank you Chair Paz. Good
14 afternoon. My name is Deanna Carrillo, and I'm the
15 director of the Renewable Energy Division at the Energy
16 Commission. And my division is supporting the work here
17 of the Lithium Valley Commission and the Blue-Ribbon
18 Commission. I've been asked to provide an overview of
19 portions of the state budget here today.

20 Next slide, please.

21 The budget cycle has evolved in a whirlwind of
22 activity on many topics critical to the state and to
23 this region. Overall, the budget is comprised of
24 several different bills that aren't all in one
25 compilation or place. In fact, while the primary budget

1 has been enacted, the legislature is still in
2 discussions and negotiations with administration on
3 other funding allocations. So, the session will close,
4 and all related bills must be approved by the
5 legislature next Tuesday, I believe, August 31st.

6 In the initial budget bills, there are two key
7 bills that directly relate to geothermal and lithium
8 development in the Salton Sea region. Investments in
9 the Salton Sea region have been a priority for the
10 governor, as we saw from the introduction of the January
11 budget updates in the May Revision, and the budget
12 enacted last month. Full disclosure, I'm not a budget
13 expert. But I am here to speak to the issues and can
14 help answer questions that do rise or loop back to you.

15 The Newsom administration has consistently
16 focused on a lithium-based framework that would promote
17 a robust California-based lithium extraction industry
18 that considers the needs of the local communities where
19 the lithium extraction occurs, while also recognizing
20 the significant benefits of having a domestic supply of
21 lithium for the state's goals for reducing the emissions
22 of greenhouse gases.

23 The enacted budget delivers on this vision.
24 At a high level, the geothermal and lithium related
25 budget provisions can be described as including three

1 key financial components. AB -- I'm sorry, Assembly
2 Bill 208 includes the lithium extraction law, of which
3 80 percent of those proceeds going to counties where the
4 extraction is occurring, and 20 percent towards Salton
5 Sea restoration efforts, and community benefit projects
6 in the region, with specific requirements for
7 expenditures by Imperial County.

8 Five million in general fund dollars are
9 designated for Imperial County to be used for a
10 Programmatic Environmental Impact Report, and a Health
11 Impact Assessment, and to support community outreach and
12 capacity related to developing the Programmatic
13 Environmental Impact Report and the lithium development
14 within the county. And there is \$80 million in general
15 fund monies for the San Diego State Brawley Center. I'm
16 gonna unpack that so we can all get a better
17 understanding of what that means.

18 Next slide -- ohh. Next slide, please.

19 With the budget, the state created a new law
20 called the Lithium Extraction Law. It requires any
21 person who extracts lithium from geothermal fluid, ore,
22 rock, minerals, clay, or any other naturally occurring
23 substance in the state on or after January 1st, 2023, to
24 pay a lithium excise tax upon each metric ton of
25 extracted lithium carbonate equivalent, at specified

1 rates.

2 The tax preempts county, municipal, or
3 district taxes on lithium extraction, or lithium
4 storage, but doesn't prohibit other local taxes being
5 assessed. The tax is paid to the state quarterly, and
6 the money collected will be deposited into the newly
7 created Lithium Extraction Excise Tax Fund.

8 The law creates an AB 20 allocation framework
9 for the monies received. 80 percent of the monies
10 collected must be dispersed by the State Controller to
11 all counties in proportion to the amount of the taxes,
12 interest penalties, and other amounts collected for
13 lithium extraction within each county. Each county must
14 establish an account from -- separate from other
15 accounts the county has.

16 And the law includes very specific provisions
17 for Imperial County for its use of these excise tax
18 monies. The county must develop a method to distribute
19 not less than 30 percent of the funds to Imperial County
20 communities that are most directly and indirectly
21 impacted by the lithium extraction activities. And the
22 budget bill includes a nonexclusive list of some
23 directly and indirectly affected communities. So, to
24 put them in a little more plain English, these are the
25 communities that have been identified, but it is not an

1 exclusive list.

2 The remaining 20 percent of the funds -- I'm
3 sorry, next slide, please.

4 The remaining 20 percent of the funds must be
5 deposited into a newly created account within the Salton
6 Sea Restoration Fund, which is administered by the
7 California Natural Resources Agency. The CNRA must
8 allocate the monies in the lithium sub account for very
9 specific purposes. Operation -- the first is operation
10 and maintenance of restoration projects, or other public
11 work projects, and existing -- in existence as of
12 January 1st, 2023, or developed by the state pursuant to
13 the Salton Sea management plan.

14 The second, is the restoration project is
15 required to meet the state's obligations in any state
16 plan or order related to the management of the Salton
17 Sea. The third is grants for community engagement,
18 public amenities, capital improvements, or community
19 benefit projects, including projects to help build
20 capacity for meaningful public participation and
21 outreach at and around the Salton Sea region, and those
22 communities impacted by the Salton Sea's restoration, as
23 found by the Secretary to be necessary and consistent
24 with the state management objectives of the Salton Sea
25 management plan. And those eligible for those grants

1 are not limited to but include tribal governments,
2 nonprofit corporations, and local governments that serve
3 disadvantaged communities, or severely disadvantaged
4 communities, as found by the Secretary.

5 When awarding a grant to a nonprofit
6 corporation, CNRA must give preference to a nonprofit
7 corporation that meets all the following criteria. The
8 first, it's in good standing by having complied with all
9 state and federal requirements applicable to nonprofit
10 corporations. The second, it's demonstrated presence in
11 the Salton Sea region and experience working across
12 different sectors. Including but not limited to
13 community stakeholders, local and state agencies,
14 academia, independent contractors and researchers, and
15 the nonprofit corporation stuff implementing a grant
16 will be located in or near the disadvantaged communities
17 near the Salton Sea. And third, the nonprofit
18 corporation possesses experience relating to
19 environmental justice initiatives, health intervention
20 programs, direct assistance services, and civic
21 engagement and education with the community stakeholders
22 in the region.

23 Before allocating monies pursuant to this
24 article, CNRA shall develop and adopt project
25 solicitation and evaluation guidelines. So, that will

1 be something to look for. In turn, before adopting the
2 guidelines, the agency shall consult with tribes and
3 hold two public meetings to consider tribal input and
4 public comments.

5 In addition, the guidelines must encourage,
6 where feasible, inclusion of the following project
7 components. Efficient use of water supplies and other
8 natural resources, protection and preservation of
9 habitat, mitigation of dust and other human health
10 hazards, protection of tribal cultural resources,
11 operation and maintenance of built infrastructure, and
12 access and inclusion of underserved or underrepresented
13 communities in the public process.

14 Next slide, please.

15 As I mentioned, the budget also includes and
16 provides \$5 million in general fund monies to Imperial
17 County, which is allocated as follows. 3.8 million to
18 prepare the county's Programmatic Environmental Impact
19 Report and Health Impact Assessment, and to support
20 community outreach for geothermal energy development and
21 lithium extraction processing production and related
22 manufacturing activities. \$800,000 to distribute grants
23 for engagement by community-based organizations in the
24 county on the Programmatic Environmental Impact Report
25 created by the county for lithium and geothermal energy

1 development efforts in the county.

2 And lastly, \$350,000 to support the activities
3 of an ombudsperson to engage with stakeholders on
4 lithium extraction, rare earth mineral mining and
5 renewable energy generation, to provide enhanced
6 communication by and between internal departments within
7 the county, and assistance with state and federal
8 agencies. What the budget doesn't do is specify any
9 particular process for the county to follow in
10 implementing these requirements. So, there's an
11 opportunity for public engagement with the county on the
12 process that it develops.

13 Next slide please.

14 I'd like to serve it back on the excise tax.

15 And actually just note -- but before we get to the slide
16 -- that even though the excise tax has been enacted,
17 there's a requirement for the Department of Tax and Fee
18 Administration, or CDTFA, to consult with Department of
19 Finance and prepare a study on that tax.

20 Okay, this is I believe my last slide, so I
21 appreciate your patience. And this is the expanded
22 allowable uses of Geothermal Development Account funds.
23 There have long been provisions in state law that
24 provide the allocation of revenue distributed to the
25 state by the federal government under federal laws

1 relating to royalty and lease payments made to the US
2 government by geothermal developers operating on federal
3 land in California. Two recipients of these funds are
4 the counties in which land has been leased for
5 geothermal development, and the Energy Commission. But
6 they can only use the funds for purposes allowed by law.

7 The Budget Act made changes to expand those
8 allowable uses to include those shown on the slide. The
9 Energy Commission has an existing geothermal grant and
10 loan program in place that promotes the development of
11 geothermal resources and supporting technologies by
12 offering grant opportunities and other resources to
13 local governments and private entities. The Energy
14 Commission is evaluating that new law, this new law, and
15 working through the development of a solicitation for
16 grants and modifications to the program.

17 That ends my overview of the key existing
18 portions in the budget today that have been enacted law,
19 that exists today. The state is working on many
20 different fronts to implement the provisions of this
21 enacted budget. And as I mentioned, the legislative
22 session goes through August 31st. So, additional
23 negotiations related to funding and the budget will
24 close at the end of this month.

25 And with that, Chair Paz, I'm open to any

1 questions or discussion, but I turn it back to you for
2 discussion by the Commission.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Deanna. We will start
4 with discussion with members here in Calipatria.

5 Yes, Ryan Kelly, Vice Chair Kelley?

6 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: What is the balance of
7 the Geothermal Development Fund?

8 MS. CARRILLO: I will have to get back to you
9 on that. I think I'll have to get back to you on that.

10 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: And just for clarity,
11 once the balance of the Energy Commission's fund
12 (INDISCERNIBLE) back to the state. Just for clarity so
13 that we can get either (INDISCERNIBLE)

14 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: (INDISCERNIBLE)

15 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: Okay, so, I think what
16 we'll do is we'll get you information on both. We'll
17 look at what's happening with the money at the state
18 level, and then also what the Energy Commission
19 currently has in its accounts.

20 And for the record, Kourtney Vaccaro,
21 Commissioner with the California Energy Commission.

22 Because it is two different amounts - and
23 that's why when we were talking, Deanna was mentioning
24 that we're looking at doing a solicitation. It's really
25 looking at the funds that are currently in there, for

1 the Energy Commission's account. So, I think that's
2 probably the one that you're most interested in.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Any other comments that --
4 Commissioner Olmedo?

5 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Thank you for the bill
6 review. I've become more and more familiar with the
7 language. And I was just brought copies here on the
8 letters that have been submitted. I know there was some
9 piece around the Salton Sea within the Imperial valley,
10 one being the Salton Sea, it had concerns that they were
11 not included. And I just want to say that through the
12 negotiations, I know that Supervisor Kelley didn't
13 forget about his district. I know Supervisor -- I mean,
14 Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia made sure that he pushed
15 hard to make sure that these -- there was equity in
16 distribution. That every community, both the directly
17 impacted and indirectly, were acknowledged and
18 recognized within.

19 And I really believe that this is creating a
20 new roadmap for Imperial County. I'm very optimistic of
21 the way that they came into -- well, they lead, you
22 know, the conversation. And being on board and agreeing
23 to a more equitable path forward. But it's just the
24 beginning. So, I guess a good beginning. There's still
25 a lot more still to come, you know, with the

1 Programmatic EIR, with making sure that these other
2 investments, such as the 800,000, truly help bring in
3 the environmental justice perspectives into the
4 Programmatic EIR, trying to level the playing field
5 there in that process. And, I think it's, it's a good
6 start, you know, I'm looking forward to seeing what else
7 can be done, you know, with the significant amount of
8 resources that are potentially going to come to
9 California from the federal government, and in this
10 historical surplus budget that was invested, as well as
11 transitioning us to addressing both our global crisis,
12 but as well as our local and regional opportunities to
13 transition. And divesting from more harmful greenhouse
14 gas emitting technologies to better fuels, better
15 opportunities, better jobs.

16 So, I really think this is a good step in the
17 right direction. And there's still a lot more to be
18 done right? You know, in making sure that Coachella
19 doesn't feel like they got slighted or didn't get -- you
20 know, I actually was pretty impressed that Imperial was
21 okay with 20 percent going to Salton Sea, given that I
22 think we can agree that the state has a responsibility
23 on that. So, I thought that that was a good show of
24 good faith.

25 But, other than that, you know, still a lot

1 more work to be done. We hope that through the rest of
2 our time here, that we're able to include as much of the
3 concerns and the opportunities that the community has.
4 At the end of the day, well you know, that's the goal
5 that I think most of us, if not all of us have. Thank
6 you.

7 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Anyone else here in
8 Calipatria? Rod? No? Okay. I do want to add, before
9 I turn it on to the Zoom platform, some thoughts that
10 came to mind as I was hearing the budget. And there is
11 as always, with, you know, legislation, a general
12 framework, just enough to get direction, but there's
13 some details that still need to be figured out through
14 the different jurisdictions. And when it came to some
15 of the dollars allocated, I think, in this case both to
16 Imperial County directly and the CNRA, there are
17 opportunities to think about participatory design and
18 budgeting.

19 I mean, we've heard it from different experts
20 who've testified and the workshops around how we gain
21 more inclusivity and equity. And we've also heard it
22 directly from Imperial County residents during our
23 meetings, that having that ability to participate. And
24 initially I was just thinking budgeting because that's
25 the most familiar to me when, you know, budget decisions

1 are being made, even though there's already set
2 criteria.

3 And I know Ryan and I talked about this, and I
4 mean, he's -- from what I've heard from the community
5 and what I've heard from Ryan, I think there's alignment
6 in terms of the needs. You know, infrastructure, where
7 these investments are gonna go. But there's also an
8 opportunity to, with limited resources, to have
9 conversations about where do we start? Where do we go?

10 What makes sense?

11 And that's really what the participatory
12 budgeting process would allow for. So, I know Ryan
13 agreed to that, and it's just not written anywhere. But
14 I just want to state it again, as a reminder of some of
15 the things that we've heard and conversations that we've
16 had here.

17 And I was wondering how the CNRA could adopt a
18 similar process for the allocation that they received.
19 And initially I was having a hard time, because it was
20 talking about maintenance and operations. And I was
21 like, what's the opportunity there?

22 But there are those other two bullet points
23 that were presented to us. And particularly, in one of
24 the -- which one was it? The grants for community
25 engagement, for public amenities, capital improvement,

1 community benefit projects, including projects to help
2 build capacity for meaningful public participation and
3 outreach.

4 I mean, in all of that, I think the CNRA could
5 adopt participatory planning, or participatory design,
6 where they're not the only ones thinking about what
7 these items mean, and what they mean for the local
8 communities of Imperial, or for the local communities
9 surrounding the Salton Sea. So again, I wanted to
10 mention this, and I think CNRA could also practice some
11 of those strategies that we've heard from others in the
12 past. But those are my comments.

13 I will now turn it over to those joining us
14 via Zoom. You can let us know if you want to speak by
15 using the raise-hand button. And I see Jonathan
16 Weisgall.

17 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Thanks, Chair Paz.
18 There's an expression, sort of everything has been said
19 but not everybody has said it. I don't want to follow
20 that rule. I think between you and Commissioner Olmedo,
21 you've made the key points.

22 This is a robust amount of funding. I think
23 it should meet a lot of goals. And the next challenge
24 will be implementation and making it work. But I just
25 want to second the views expressed by the two of you.

1 Thanks very much.

2 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Commissioner Weisgall.

3 Anyone else? Any other Commissioners who are joining us
4 via Zoom?

5 COMMISSIONER SOTO: Hey, Sylvia, this is Tom.

6 Sorry about it, but I just joined, okay? I was running
7 late with a phone call.

8 CHAIR PAZ: Welcome, Tom. And we're just
9 having discussion right now around the budget, the
10 enacted budget and the items that were included in the
11 budget related to continuing to expand or develop the
12 lithium. So, if you have any comments on that? I know
13 you are aware of the budget, even if you just arrived.
14 So, feel free if you want to take a few minutes, but
15 that's the conversation we're having right now.

16 COMMISSIONER SOTO: I'm fine right now, thank
17 you.

18 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Manfred, Scott
19 Manfred?

20 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Yeah, I just had one
21 question. And that had to be on number F of the
22 administrative costs. I believe you had on there,
23 minerals. So, are we talking about more than one
24 mineral? As far as the lithium, are we talking about
25 more than one minerals that's going to be extracted and

1 used? Or we're just talking about just the lithium
2 itself?

3 CHAIR PAZ: I will turn to Deanna for that
4 answer.

5 MS. CARRILLO: Thank you. Commissioner Scott.
6 I will get back to you with the question. I think I
7 heard two. Just so if you could clarify. I heard, does
8 the lithium extraction law impact other minerals beyond
9 lithium? Or is it just lithium? And I think I also
10 might have heard the question not related to the budget,
11 but related to the technology and the process, of
12 whether other minerals are extracted with the lithium
13 extraction process using the technology? Is that a
14 correct understanding of the question?

15 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Right. If you can go
16 back to that one slide of the administrative costs that
17 you had on there earlier?

18 (Pause)

19 MS. CARRILLO: Is this the slide you were
20 referring to?

21 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: No, the next one, go to
22 the next one.

23 Keep going.

24 Keep going. I think - that was the last one
25 that you showed us. It had the administrative cost.

1 MS. CARRILLO: So, this statute refers to an
2 existing grant in aid program at the Energy Commission,
3 in which both public entities and local entities can
4 request, depending on how the CEC develops the funding
5 allocation, can request an offset of administrative
6 costs to any specific project. So that would have to be
7 defined by both the Energy Commission solicitation under
8 the guidance of the statute, as well as the proposal of
9 any potential applicant or interested party.

10 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Okay. So, the question I
11 asked, and answer that I needed -- you said that you
12 were going to get back to me with that later? That --

13 MS. CARRILLO: I'd be happy to get back to you
14 to clarify in writing if that was unclear. Yup.

15 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Yeah. Okay. That was
16 it.

17 MS. CARRILLO: Sounds good. And just to
18 clarify, Commissioner Scott, that that would -- we may
19 not have an answer today because some of these elements
20 are still under development. And I'll -- but under this
21 broadened statute.

22 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Right. It's under
23 development. But, you have on there of a C-F-H, and
24 under them you have minerals. More -- to me, it seems
25 like there's more than one when you're talking about

1 minerals. So that was the question that I had, you
2 know.

3 So, I know the extraction of minerals, which
4 is when you are extracting the lithium, you're going to
5 be bringing up other minerals. But you're telling me
6 that you're going to inject the other minerals back into
7 the ground. So, is that what you're talking about? Or
8 you're just kind of about other metals that might be
9 used later in the future?

10 MS. CARRILLO: So, Commissioner Scott, I'm
11 going to take that question and we'll get back to you.

12 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Okay.

13 MS. CARRILLO: Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Alright. Thank you,

15 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Commissioner Scott.

16 Just for reference, since I have the notes I
17 can cheat sheet, or I can cheat. You mentioned, Deanna,
18 that with the budget the state created a new law, called
19 The Lithium Extraction Law. And then you went on to
20 list what it does. And it said it requires any person
21 who extracts lithium from geothermal fluid, ore, rock
22 minerals. So, I think that's probably, like, minerals,
23 clay, or any other naturally occurring substance in the
24 state. So, I think that's really where the question is
25 maybe arising, just for some clarity. I understand you

1 don't have an answer right now.

2 Is there anyone else, any of the other
3 Commissioners on Zoom who have a comment or a question?

4 MS. LOZA: We have Commissioner Hanks on the
5 line.

6 COMMISSIONER HANKS: I have a couple of
7 questions. One, during your presentation, you mentioned
8 30 percent for direct and indirect cities. There's a
9 question locally that are being asked, and comments
10 made, which is a misunderstanding. Many believe that
11 the directly impacted cities will get 30 percent. And I
12 think because you have a direct impacted city list, and
13 the indirect is not exclusive. So, there's a lot of
14 confusion in the communities locally here, what the
15 direct impacted cities would receive. Are they going to
16 receive some type of priority? Or if not, then why?
17 Why is there two lists?

18 MS. CARRILLO: I can't speak to why there was
19 two lists, that was under the legislative intent. But,
20 I'll look into that question. And I believe that the
21 priority -- the prioritization, that has not been
22 established,

23 COMMISSIONER HANKS: Maybe the other
24 (INDISCERNIBLE) with multiple minerals. It's my
25 understanding there is a geothermal brine mineral, and

1 there's other minerals. And some of the other minerals,
2 not knowing how the tax is going to work on it, you know
3 if the tax is put on other minerals at the same rate,
4 it's worth more than -- the tax is more than the
5 mineral.

6 So, there's some concern about those out there
7 that have mineral rights, that if this isn't clear,
8 they're going to have stranded assets. And I'd kind of
9 like to know how that's going to be handled.

10 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Hanks, I believe Vice
11 Chair Kelley has maybe some answers.

12 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: I think -- so,
13 Commissioner Hanks' questions are related to the
14 allocation to the County. And so, I'll address that to
15 my best recollection. It is that this is a lithium
16 extraction from geothermal brine exclusive. Actually,
17 lithium tax, severance tax, across the state of
18 California. It has no bearing on any other item, any
19 other extraction material that's coming out. It is
20 lithium exclusive.

21 And then, in regards to the distribution of
22 how it would come into the county, the language that is
23 incorporated in the legislation is reflective of
24 conversations with the Assemblymember and with our State
25 Senator. It is a bit confusing to us as well, that a

1 statewide mineral assessment has three sub-paragraphs
2 referencing Imperial County only, but Kern County has no
3 reference, nor does any other location where lithium may
4 be developed.

5 But, to your question, that -- we developed
6 the plan, and it did identify how the communities of
7 significant impact were going to be addressed. And that
8 the North End specifically, was to get the lion's share
9 or that greater proportion. So, the way that it's
10 written and the way that we are interpreting and will
11 continue to have conversations with the community, is
12 that 30 percent of the revenue as it comes will be used
13 in the North End. And that does include bridges, roads,
14 broadband, water, sewer, services, and the development
15 of Lithium Valley.

16 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner Olmedo?

17 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Well, at the risk of
18 being repetitive here with what Commissioner Kelley just
19 mentioned, it is a state tax. So, anywhere where -- any
20 county where lithium would potentially be extracted,
21 that county would receive the tax as written by the
22 state policy. I think there's some misunderstanding
23 about that, that it was only exclusive to Imperial. And
24 that sort of created a frenzy they wouldn't want to
25 attach to that.

1 But it is a state tax, no different than what
2 we're trying to do away with, which is fossil fuel.
3 Right? That would be no different than saying, let's
4 get a percentage of the tax from, I don't know, Kern
5 County, and then bring it here. Right? So, just want
6 to just further clarify what Commissioner Kelley's
7 already said.

8 And the other topic that I think it needs to
9 be part of this Commission's conversations, is Hanks
10 just brought up. I think it's important that a lot of
11 what happens in terms of the -- you know, clearly there
12 are environmental justice concerns. And those will be
13 addressed. Hopefully in this report, and throughout the
14 Programmatic EIR process. Those are going to be
15 important.

16 The other part of it is in the way that
17 historically these resources have been invested. How
18 these resources have been monetized, liquidized, however
19 it is that the formula that that gets used. In that
20 example, like Imperial Irrigation District. Communities
21 like Calipatria who have little access to affordable
22 water, if we can even call it that. Yet the abundance
23 of water that the IID has managed hasn't seemed to have
24 had any solutions to solving these problems. We
25 shouldn't have these problems.

1 And the minerals that have been extracted, or
2 have or potentially will be extracted, and the royalties
3 that the IID has been entrusted as a public resource,
4 need a follow-on. This is not the best example. But
5 IID needs to step it up even further and say, "We can do
6 better." And we can get these resources and
7 redistribute them into all communities, directly
8 impacted and indirectly impacted.

9 This provides a roadmap that they can far--
10 take it further than that. Right? So, I think those
11 are definitely -- I'd like to hear how IID, in the
12 future workshop, because I know that that probably may
13 require others to be experts that manage that, unless
14 the experts aren't in the room. But it would be great
15 to see how that gets redistributed. Because so much of
16 it is -- and I've heard over the years. We're just here
17 just to manage a public res-- well, a resource, which is
18 ag-water. Agricultural water. That's all they do. But
19 they do more than that. And over 100 years, a lot has
20 changed in what we expect as communities of the IID, as
21 well as a more equitable distribution of these
22 resources.

23 That time has come, right? And that time is
24 now. And it's that time to make sure that IID doesn't
25 get upset, that they recognize -- because they're from

1 this community. They don't have to get upset. They
2 don't have to kind of, you know, isolate me and say,
3 "Hey, you're the one that's steering. You know, you
4 need to kind of follow the, follow the herd." Right?
5 No.

6 We just want equity and justice, and that
7 needs to be part of this conversation. Because I get
8 it, you know they probably feel like hey, you're taxing
9 here, you're taxing there. Well, I mean, these are
10 resources that the community hasn't had an opportunity
11 or the privilege to have equitable access to. And it
12 all tie-- it's all tied together. It's all tied
13 together. So, so, I hope that this today is the
14 beginning of that conversation.

15 And that, you know, IID is a community
16 resource. We want them to succeed. We don't want them
17 to fail. We want them to be financially stable and
18 continue to provide us the good service that they
19 provide us in a public manner. In a way that we all can
20 then step up and say, you know, like especially like
21 issues right now, where water, you know, there's water
22 scarcity.

23 You really don't want to have residents out
24 here saying, "Hey, I don't have clean water." You know,
25 or, "I don't have affordable water." You know, what's

1 in it for us? Why does IID not want us to step up for
2 IID? Because eventually, it can't just be that small
3 percentage will have benefitted. It needs to be all of
4 us, equitably. And being able to turn on the faucet and
5 say, "Oh, we got water." "Oh, you're getting more than
6 your fair share."

7 No, because there's others who are getting a
8 inequitable amount of resources, and haven't been
9 expected to do, or to have to manage their resources in
10 the way that the rest of the public has. So, it's
11 complicated, but I think it's a conversation that needs
12 to be had.

13 CHAIR PAZ: Commissioner James Hanks?

14 COMMISSIONER HANKS: Commissioner Olmedo makes
15 my point here. This is a Lithium Valley Commission.
16 And our purpose, in my understanding, was to do
17 everything we could to facilitate the development of the
18 lithium and its byproducts. The questions that I
19 brought up, and for some reason, I think it put a burr
20 in the saddle, but IID currently has very few geothermal
21 royalties that are developed.

22 There are a lot of private properties that
23 have been developed. And there are lithium deposits
24 within those projects. And if we venture out too far,
25 and this is all inclusive, not lithium, then we're not

1 only stranding the public's resources, which is owned by
2 IID, which is a public agency, with the private ones.
3 And this behooves us, when we submit a report to the
4 CEC, that this not be in limbo. Well, we'll cross that
5 bridge when we come to it. It needs to be understood
6 now.

7 So, for that reason, we ask that some of the
8 private individuals, public agencies whatever, that have
9 royalties, that they be included in this study that's to
10 be done by the Sacramento, so we can get some clarity on
11 this. And the point I think you missed that Ryan made,
12 Commissioner Kelley, was that it makes reference to
13 geothermal brine lithium extraction.

14 Now, folks had pretty much limited to just,
15 maybe just Imperial County. There's other lithium
16 extraction, but not geothermal lithium extraction. And
17 that is something that the state needs to be aware of,
18 and need to be careful with that. Because you cannot
19 just pinpoint different communities.

20 So, there's nothing I said here that will
21 distract from disadvantaged communities, just the
22 opposite. Just the opposite. I consider myself one of
23 the foremost proponents of lithium development for the
24 benefit of our community. Been working on it long time.

25 Thank you.

1 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Commissioner Hanks.

2 And I will go back to Commissioner, Vice Chair Ryan
3 Kelley.

4 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: Thank you, Commissioner
5 Hanks. And I think that the last slide that Deanna was
6 showing was in regards to the funding. And that is
7 specific to geothermal from the Energy Commission or
8 from other assessments that are being done by the state.
9 But I know that the hard rock mining that's being
10 proposed in the Mojave Desert is also going to be
11 subject to lithium severance taxes. And they have been
12 consulted, and wherever else they find the exploration.

13 But I think that, and I'm not sure -- I did
14 come in a minute late. Or maybe 10. But the California
15 Air Resources Board voted today to mandate no gasoline
16 powered vehicle sales by 2035. That's a very
17 significant move as we've seen over the past year. So,
18 I hope that there's a well good news for you, Rod, and
19 your endeavors.

20 And Mist-- Commissioner Hanks is very correct,
21 that we do not want to -- we do not want to see a
22 resource undeveloped. We do not want to see it sit idle
23 in this valley. We want to see it develop. We want to
24 foster that development. We want it to have an integral
25 part of our community, and to lift up all of our

1 communities, our populace, our youth.

2 And we have a lot of hopes. This is not going
3 to happen tomorrow. But we're on the stage of being
4 able to do something very good. And I -- there will be
5 a lot more conversation past today.

6 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: Chair Paz, if I may? I
7 wanted to possibly just make a correction for the
8 record. I know in a presentation that was provided, it
9 was really kind of a high level of broad brushstrokes to
10 just sort of give a sense of the three pertinent, most
11 pertinent right, in terms of the funding. But just for
12 clarity on what we're talking about, what the law
13 applies to, I just kind of wanted to read the first
14 sentence of it because I think this is an opportunity to
15 just maybe correct, perhaps, some of this misinformation
16 or misunderstanding.

17 So, the language is, "Beginning January 1st,
18 2023, a producer shall pay lithium extraction excise tax
19 upon each metric ton of lithium carbonate equivalent
20 extracted from geothermal fluid" I don't know how to
21 pronounce this. "spodumene ore, rock, minerals, clay or
22 any other naturally occurring substance in the state."

23 And the reason I make that clarification, is
24 it's not focused exclusively on geothermal brine. It is
25 a statewide tax applicable throughout the state, for

1 these different methods, you know, or different
2 resources from which the lithium might be extracted.
3 So, I just wanted to provide that clarity.

4 And also, I think what we will make sure to do
5 from the Energy Commission is to docket the bill that
6 has all of the pertinent language. It has all the
7 specifics, right? Again, this was just a high-level
8 conversation, it wasn't intended to get into all of the
9 details. But I think it's incumbent upon us to go ahead
10 and put that law in the docket as well, just for the
11 benefit of the commissioners and the public.

12 And again, for the record, Kourtney Vaccaro,
13 Commissioner with California Energy Commission.

14 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you for that clarification.
15 And on that note of clarification and needs, from --
16 from the beginning, from me joining this Commission,
17 there's been a need for clarity on various items,
18 including the process of the extraction of lithium, the
19 impact of the development of lithium, the impacts on the
20 environment, the impacts on the economy. And it only is
21 in the benefit of this industry and the goals that the
22 people of Imperial County and its representative have,
23 that we spend the time providing those verifications.

24 I think the Draft Report is one opportunity to
25 do that, based on the expert testimony that we've

1 received. And to the extent that there are lingering
2 questions, that those are also uplifted in the report.
3 And I say this, because even in the beginning public
4 comments, right, people are wondering what are the
5 impacts on the soil? And being that we depend on
6 agriculture, and it's an important industry in the
7 Salton Sea region as a whole, that there is clarity, and
8 that people are receiving the answers as much as
9 possible.

10 I know that the Programmatic EIR is an
11 opportunity, and that there is funding to do that
12 community outreach. But as we've heard through many
13 conversations, right, those processes don't tend to be
14 the most adequate for addressing some of these
15 questions. So, I really urge that one, we use the
16 report as an opportunity to start answering those
17 questions, providing as much clarity as we have. And,
18 that there is a concerted effort moving forward.

19 And I'm not saying -- I mean, this commission
20 is going to end you know, at some point, and that -- so
21 we need to identify who will be continuing those
22 conversations and ensuring that the information is out
23 there in a way that is accessible and that the community
24 will trust. So that then the goals and the vision that
25 I've heard throughout, you know, my tenure here can

1 become a reality if -- again, if they're not an impact
2 to the community and the environment. Just wanted to
3 highlight that because it's been an item that again,
4 sometimes we jump ahead, but there's some legwork that
5 needs to be done so that it's smoother as we advance.

6 I don't see any other comments, and we can go
7 to the next slide, and open this conversation for public
8 comment.

9 So, we will now open the floor to public
10 comments relating to the update on the enacted 2022-
11 2023, California State Budget. If you are in
12 Calipatria, please proceed to the podium or please raise
13 your hand and we will bring a microphone to you. A
14 reminder to please state and spell your name, and state
15 your affiliation, unless you want to remain anonymous.
16 And I do see somebody at the podium.

17 MR. FLORES: Hello. Good afternoon. My name
18 is Jose Flores, J-O-S-E F-L-O-R-E-S. I'm speaking today
19 as a resident of Imperial County who has resided in
20 three different cities, El Centro, Imperial, and
21 Brawley. And my clarification or point of view kind of
22 relates to Commissioner Hanks. When I read the wording
23 on directly or indirectly, it kind of threw me for a
24 loop. It's open to interpretation, whether -- I --
25 certain people can interpret it as directly -- it would

1 have more weight, more emphasis. And even though
2 sometimes we strive to have more local control that the
3 state gives out to our communities, at some point, it
4 might be more beneficial to have the state set 30
5 percent off the bat, very clear, to the directly
6 affected five communities that are in North End, because
7 these are going to have a drastic direct effect in
8 health, transportation, infrastructure, clinics, EMS,
9 fire departments, et cetera.

10 So that is an issue that I kind of hope it
11 doesn't take a wrong turn. Commissioner Kelley is also
12 our supervisor in the North End, and hopefully our
13 county doesn't turn to the Hunger Games, where it's a
14 free for all for that 30 percent. And the North End
15 again is left out, kind of hung out to dry. Like, most
16 of the time, it is due to lack of participation for many
17 reasons of the community having direct relationship --
18 (AUDIO CUT OUT 1:13:46)

19 -- power which is El Centro. And as we know,
20 sometimes it's -- just to travel to get to certain
21 meetings leaves out certain community members that
22 desperately need our advocacy. Thank you.

23 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, I welcome anyone else
24 here in Calipatria.

25 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: Hello, my name is Maria

1 Nava-Froelich -- there? My name is Maria Nava-Froelich,
2 I'm Calipatria City Mayor. I'm also a Family Resource
3 Center Director/Coordinator for the Calipatria School
4 District.

5 So, I am also concerned in regards to the
6 presentation that Deanna presented in regards to the 30
7 percent being directly and then other communities that
8 are specified indirectly. So, I have been very
9 outspoken in regards to, you know, the county not
10 including us. And I know that we have a good Supervisor
11 and it's nothing personal against Mr. Kelley, because
12 he's been a good supervisor to us for the most part.

13 I am concerned though, that if it is left
14 unclear, the concern would be that maybe it could turn
15 into a slush fund. We have had the bad luck that when
16 we didn't get the solar project, the community benefits
17 and the ag benefits, or the community benefits -- we
18 hardly don't get any of it. As a matter of fact, the
19 City of Calipatria submitted a grant application under
20 the solar program of our community benefits for 134,000
21 to be able to build bathrooms for the Rademacher Park,
22 and the county only awarded us 10 percent of that which
23 was 13,000. But yet, we have noticed that there are
24 loans given out to different organizations, you know, to
25 start up. Some communities now gonna be overseeing some

1 of those grants.

2 So, is it concerning? Yes, it is. Why? The
3 North End, Calipatria, Brawley, anything that's
4 considered the North End, Brawley included, is -- we are
5 very much neglected, or underserved, or we're
6 underprivileged. We don't want the same thing to happen
7 now that that lithium project is coming in.

8 We're really excited. We've been cautiously,
9 you know, excited on the sidelines, but we've been
10 supporting the lithium project. I also have a concern
11 in regards to the excise tax that you mentioned earlier,
12 that it's going to be a study. So, I would just kind of
13 wish that the study had taken place before, and not
14 after, or during the time that it's taking place,
15 because then they'll also add a little bit more
16 confusion, I think.

17 But, by the same token, I know that Mr. Hanks
18 has also been a good advocate and a representative on
19 IID. He's now retiring. I know that -- I understand
20 that IID also is going to receive royalties, so I want
21 to see if maybe you can share some of the royalties out
22 in the North End, because that's where it's hitting.
23 These projects are hitting closest to the fence line
24 communities. So, I would rather the IID voluntarily
25 provide something back to the communities, rather than

1 having something similar like the excise tax having to
2 dictate.

3 Want to share something too. You know Mr.
4 Olmedo, he's been a good advocate in the environmental
5 portion. So, with all these three people together and
6 the Lithium Commission that has been put together, I
7 know there's been a lot of hard work taking place. I
8 could tell there's just so much that has happened. I'm
9 sad that the Lithium Valley Commission is going to
10 expire October 1st. I almost wish that you guys could
11 continue because there's so much more work to do. And I
12 think that all of you play a very important role to have
13 not only industry, our supervisor, the different
14 components that are here, including the California
15 Energy Commission. I just wish that if there would be
16 an opportunity to extend it or maybe, I don't know,
17 maybe do an addendum or something to be able to
18 continue.

19 You are all very well grounded in regards to
20 the education and the process that has been taking
21 place. You're familiar, a lot of you, with the
22 community and the valley as a whole. And I think that
23 it's very important, you know, that the work continue,
24 because there's more.

25 And as far as the community, we want the

1 industry to give back to the community. And I think
2 that they've always wanted to. CalEnergy and the energy
3 plants, they've been friends of the school district and
4 the North End community forever. I think 40 years, it's
5 a very healthy organization. But there's just a lot of
6 issues here in Imperial Valley, we're rural Imperial
7 County, we're disadvantaged, we want the work to
8 continue. And with all those elements in place, I just
9 think that -- I want to make sure that some of the
10 clarifications that are being requested today are
11 specified when, you know, when it actually -- before it
12 happens, and not after.

13 So just keeping that in mind. I'm hoping that
14 you take our concerns back to the appropriate people.
15 And then also with the Lithium Valley -- I'm not sure,
16 Ms. Paz, if you're able to get with Eduardo Garcia,
17 Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia and Senator Hueso, maybe
18 they can extend an addendum so that we could continue
19 this Lithium Valley. And maybe in the next steps,
20 moving towards the future. Thank you very much.

21 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you for your comments. And
22 I do want to offer -- the report is due this October
23 1st, but then the Lithium Valley Commission sunsets
24 October of 2023. So, we do have a little bit of more
25 time after the report has been submitted. So again, Ms.

1 Nava, I don't know if you've got -- you heard me when
2 you were writing over there, but the Lithium Valley
3 Commission sunsets October of 2023. So, the report is
4 due this October, but the Commission, yeah, can continue
5 to 2023. Thank you.

6 Yes, sir?

7 MR. AMIDON: Yes, my name's Ron Amidon, A-M-I-
8 D-O-N, and my family are native residents here in
9 Calipatria. I'd like to refer back to the summary that
10 you shared, the state budget summary. And, it made
11 reference to, you know, communities or areas that are
12 affected by the lithium extraction in Imperial County,
13 but I didn't hear specific names for those communities.
14 And I wanted to know if they are -- if they're mentioned
15 in the original state budget?

16 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: Mr. Amidon?

17 MR. AMIDON: Yes, sir.

18 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: It is specifically every
19 town and city in the county is identified in the bill
20 and it says the areas that are of specific impact or
21 significant impact being Brawley, Westmorland,
22 Calipatria, Niland, and Bombay Beach.

23 MR. AMIDON: Okay, thank you.

24 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: All the other towns and
25 cities within the county are of non-significant impact

1 enlisted.

2 MR. AMIDON: Okay, so does that mean that all
3 those communities are entitled to part of that 30
4 percent tax?

5 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: Yes, sir. And there
6 was -- so there is a plan that we developed, and I've
7 shared it publicly about a month and a half ago. And
8 there will be community hearings about it. And it does
9 talk about how there is local sharing and how the North
10 End gets two draws on the same bucket. But I don't want
11 to go into the details, it is a percentage thing. But
12 every law enforcement agency, every fire agency has a
13 separate bucket, and it is -- it will be 30 percent
14 going to the North End.

15 MR. AMIDON: Okay. Now, so all those are
16 included as part of the North End/

17 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: They are, and there are
18 studies that are actually taking a look at seeing if the
19 lithium reservoir extends it just north of Brawley as
20 well.

21 MR. AMIDON: Yeah, because I -- you know, a
22 couple of our previous speakers, they shared a concern
23 about the -- well, I consider the North End, Calipat and
24 Niland, specifically being shortchanged. And I'm just
25 looking at, you -- would you anticipate maybe a

1 percentage of that 30 percent? Whereas, maybe Niland
2 and Calipat being closer to, or more greatly affected by
3 the lithium, you know, withdrawal, than say Brawley.
4 Which is a distant area. I mean --

5 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: Mr. Amidon, I can send
6 it to you and so you can read what I wrote. And if it
7 makes -- if you have any questions, we can talk about
8 it.

9 MR. AMIDON: Okay.

10 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: But there will be
11 public hearings where we will talk about specifically
12 how this rolls out. And I know it seems, in my mind,
13 premature at the moment, as we're trying to get to the
14 point where we actually have production whose revenues
15 are years away. And I know that we have a lot of
16 conversation about what will. And we will. We will
17 have more, but not in this setting. And I will happily
18 share what I wrote, and what ended up in the bill.

19 MR. AMIDON: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Kelley.

20 CHAIR PAZ: And I do have Commissioner Olmedo
21 who wants to add to that point.

22 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Yeah, just to go a
23 little further, I am accustomed to being of the more
24 social justice, environmental justice. I hear a
25 reoccurring theme, and I think it has been a theme that

1 has existed in our community for over 100 years. Again,
2 back to the inequities.

3 If those of you who are concerned, and I've
4 heard both comments, including councilmember Nava's, who
5 was not just a councilmember, but lifelong advocate of
6 these communities you serve. And, you know, you
7 mentioned several things. One is, is slush fund. And
8 you can rest assured that if you and others in the
9 community aren't at the table, it's gonna become
10 whatever, whoever's at the table. And if you don't want
11 to be ushered every time there's elections with your own
12 dollars, then you need to be at the table and you need
13 to be informing and going back to Chair Paz's comments
14 about this being a publicly, community engaged process,
15 transparent. I believe that that's what Commissioner
16 Kelley efforts are.

17 We all contributed a vision of what that looks
18 like. I've -- and so what I would encourage all of you
19 is continue to do what you do, encourage for more of you
20 to be showing up at these meetings. Right? Bring your
21 friends, bring your neighbors, bring your fellow
22 advocates, bring your communities. Best thing I can do,
23 and I imagine majority of us, if not all of us at the
24 table, is provided you the space, hear you, and provide
25 those recommendations in this report to assure that it

1 doesn't become that slush fund.

2 We've already seen -- and of course there's

3 going to be two sides to it right? Some feel like,

4 "Hey, we've done great with the ag benefits fund."

5 Right? A lot of people are gonna say, "I'm tired of

6 waiting. You look around my neighborhood, doesn't look

7 like you're investing in my neighborhood." Right?

8 Again, it's different approaches. Some feel

9 that -- and I know this is probably not going to be

10 taken well, right? But some think that poor people are

11 going to just spend their money on cigarettes and, and

12 booze, right? Give money to people can who can create

13 jobs. Those are two different priorities, two different

14 needs. And neither one has to wait for -- to get their

15 fair investment into you community, because that's what

16 equity is. Right?

17 It is about both. It's about providing the

18 resource, yeah, to create jobs. But it's about helping

19 those people who also need that help right now. You

20 know, whether it's medical support, whether it's ride

21 sharing, whether it's transportation, education.

22 There's so many needs in this community, school centers,

23 you know, and we have to use this beautiful school, but

24 why don't our communities have community centers that

25 can be available anytime of the day, not have to be just

1 a shared use space that we have to share with the
2 students, that they probably may need this facility.
3 Right? Same thing happened with our colleges. You
4 know, we have to compete, you know, with the priority
5 which is the students, and then have to share the
6 spaces.

7 But yeah, I cannot thank you enough for
8 bringing up these concerns. I say keep doing it. But
9 at the end of the day, if you're not at the table,
10 they're providing what your priorities are. It's not
11 going to happen. Just because you cast the vote, and
12 that's if you vote, because we have a very low voter
13 turnout. We have a very low census turnout. Right?
14 Just because you do that doesn't mean you're gonna get
15 what you want. And that's why you spend a lifetime
16 waiting.

17 So, I would say today is a good day to turn
18 that around and show up. Not just here, but show up at
19 the time that the county's putting up their plan. At
20 the time that IID is putting up their plan. Because
21 you know what, both have access to resource including
22 ARPA (PHONETIC). Right?

23 Those are your dollars. You have to be at the
24 table to make sure. All we can do as both a
25 Commissioner and as an advocate is do whatever I can to

1 support your vision, and obviously create a priority for
2 the obvious. These communities need resources. So,
3 thank you.

4 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER HANKS: One last comment.

6 CHAIR PAZ: One last comment, then one from
7 me. I don't want to prolong the conversation, but I
8 want to speak of something. But go ahead, Commissioner
9 Hanks.

10 COMMISSIONER HANKS: (INDISCERNIBLE) Okay.

11 There are questions comes up about royalties, owned by
12 IID and so on. Whether they royalty IID has belongs to
13 the public agency, Imperial Irrigation District. They
14 are in an amenity, and there are liabilities. And
15 whatever assets they might attain through these
16 royalties will be used to benefit our citizens, any type
17 of citizens that we serve.

18 That's a requirement on our part. We can't
19 just take the dollars from that public agency and just
20 spread it out all over the community. We can have some
21 public benefits, as long as it deals with the type of
22 service, fine. But, there's this misconception that we
23 could just go start buying them fire trucks or ambulance
24 or whatever. And that's not the case.

25 And I just want to make that clear. That any

1 royalties, and that the IID has -- any royalty the IID
2 has --

3 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: The royalty was not in the
4 legislation that we combine an IID. The royalty is
5 because if IID is a public agency, and you're working
6 with private agencies, public-private, shouldn't that be
7 taken to the voters? Or should that be taken -- the
8 public agency should not be for profit and be used for
9 infrastructure. Or maybe I'm wrong. Is it in the -- in
10 some kind of legislation or policy that we can find?

11 (INDISCERNIBLE) (Hanks and Nava speaking at
12 the same time)

13 COMMISSIONER HANKS: -- in our services in our
14 function mixed up with the county. And we do work with
15 the county (INDISCERNIBLE) water, bridges, because it
16 does entail the type of service we provide. You know,
17 we can do some things like that. But as far as taking
18 it --

19 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: The royalties coming from
20 the lithium is what I'm referring to. That one coming
21 to the IID, a public agency, shouldn't we be able to
22 decide? Because we're the public? I mean --

23 COMMISSIONER HANKS: It's --

24 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: Is that a legislation
25 somewhere? Is that an ordinance or is that a rule

1 somewhere? That --

2 COMMISSIONER HANKS: That was --

3 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: -- that it has to go in to
4 that infrastructure?

5 COMMISSIONER HANKS: -- (INDISCERNIBLE) (Hanks
6 and Nava speaking simultaneously). The Imperial
7 Irrigation District was for. And that's the purpose
8 that it must uphold.

9 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: So, we can find that in
10 the legislation, in a policy?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

12 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: That the IID --

13 COMMISSIONER HANKS: I would remind everybody,
14 we have a - we haven't even developed one pound of
15 lithium yet. Let's hope we can.

16 CHAIR PAZ: Okay. Can I enter, re-enter to
17 bring it -- bring us back to the matters of the Lithium
18 Commission? I know there is some overlap when it comes
19 to the royalties that are already being received for
20 geothermal. And maybe Mr. Hanks can provide some of the
21 documents relevant to that topic from IID.

22 But I do want to get us back to the public
23 comments. So, I'm not even going to make my comment
24 until the end because I realized we've interrupted,
25 Commissioners, we've interrupted the public comment

1 process. And I do apologize for that, we just get
2 wrapped up in the conversation. So, thank you, Ms.
3 Nava.

4 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: I don't think it's fair
5 for the royalties from the (INDISCERNIBLE) industry.
6 Going into public, IID, industry. The royalties just go
7 back into infrastructure. They should report to the
8 public. Or maybe it needs to (INDISCERNIBLE). -- in
9 legislation, that's my question.

10 (Ms. Nava Froelich and Commissioner Hanks
11 Simultaneously speaking)

12 COMMISSIONER HANKS: --legislation, but those
13 royalties will be used as seed money to develop cheaper
14 energy, lower costs, that will benefit this community.

15 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: -- station that we could
16 reference to. (INDISCERNIBLE)

17 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Ms. Nava. But I think
18 what I'm hearing -- again, I think is drumming to the
19 topics of the report and the royalties and how they are
20 used as a sum of money. I think as Commissioner Olmedo
21 mentioned, this could be a roadmap, right? And we're
22 starting maybe something a little bit different than
23 what happened with those geothermal royalties. But
24 maybe there is a recommendation that's popping up from
25 what you're saying that can be captured. At a minimum,

1 can be captured on the report. But thank you for your
2 comments.

3 Is there anyone here in Imperial wishing to
4 make a public statement?

5 MR. WHITE: Hi everybody. My name's Zion
6 White. And I'm here on behalf of the Hano-Put
7 (Phonetic), Land, Water, and Culture Conservancy. My
8 concerns really are in opposition to this project. The
9 demand that California is imposing on itself by, I think
10 Mr. Kelley stated it, the zero emissions by 2035 policy
11 that was signed. You know, the executive order by Gavin
12 Newsom. It's 35 percent by 2026, 68 by 2030, and then
13 the full 100 percent by 2035.

14 The amount of lithium that, you know, we're
15 seeking is not minimal. It's very substantial. And the
16 direct benefits that the entire California state will
17 see on the ben-- or on the resources of my tribe, and my
18 ancestral people is detrimental. And not only this
19 executive order that was produced we see the
20 introduction of things like Starship with SpaceX.
21 Starship plans to be the largest rocket that was ever
22 made in humankind. So, our technological advances as
23 human society is at its peak, truly. And this Starship
24 rocket plans to carry 150 metric tons of cargo and crew
25 to you know, the Moon, Mars and beyond.

1 And you can look this up on SpaceX, Elon Musk
2 talks about it openly. And I can only imagine how much
3 lithium goes into the electronics of the biggest rocket
4 ever made, that humans have seen, you know. And it's
5 unfortunate that the advancements of human society is
6 going to be seen through the resources of my tribe and
7 my people, who are still here and living.

8 So, I just want to express that to you all
9 here on the Commission. And state that, you know, the
10 need for the narrative that humans will save itself from
11 perishing on Earth is a narrative that we continue to
12 push and seek. And it's -- we're making it a reality.
13 Going, you know, interplanetary. We're in augmented
14 reality, virtual reality as of right now, in 2022. And
15 we're going to continue to see the advancements in that.
16 So, the need for it is not here, and we should just push
17 for the opposite. So, thank you.

18 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Is there anyone here
19 in Imp-- yes, you're welcome to the podium.

20 MS. NIERENHAUSEN: Thank you. Do I have to
21 press anything or no? No, okay.

22 I don't want anybody to take this personal.
23 I'm just gonna say what I have to say. So, thank you
24 for inviting me to be here. Thank you, Zion White.
25 Quechan tribal member, for that statement. I

1 wholeheartedly agree. I just wanted to make my
2 statements as well, since we're all meeting together.

3 I just wanted to say that I guess personally,
4 being you know, (INDISCERNIBLE), this is a dog-eat-dog
5 world. This lithium -- the reason why I say it's dog-
6 eat-dog world is because this lithium is like a rat-race
7 within the United States, to the country of China, where
8 these lithium projects originated from Chili to
9 Australia. And just like the previous speakers who I
10 have spoken, Zion White has spoken about Elon Musk and
11 the high technology.

12 Yes, I understand that we're going to go full
13 throttle on that. But, I'm going to go back in time,
14 where again, we're gonna have to reiterate this issue.
15 This is genocidal to the Native Americans. The United
16 States, this is the Native American land. It belongs to
17 the Native Americans and Native Americans have the
18 tenure, voice, as well as the indigenous.

19 As much as I've learned from these meetings,
20 I'm not hearing the interaction between the Native
21 American, politicians, the people. I'm not seeing the
22 panels, you know, embrace the natives. I'm not really
23 seeing a lot of Native Americans here, and the Native
24 Americans are on the bottom of the to-- totem pole.
25 Excuse me.

1 We're all the same right here right now. Even
2 if we're gonna go forward, this high technology -- if
3 you look outside the room, and I'm always going to say
4 this--how we got here, if you pay attention to the roads,
5 for a Native American, this is very disheartening. You
6 don't see the animals out here.

7 Back in the day, maybe in the 50's or 60's,
8 for the Native Americans or the people that had
9 originated here, ate rabbits. I don't see any more
10 rabbits. There's not very many rabbits.

11 You guys are not considering the animals, the
12 species, the plants here for Native Americans who use
13 the medicine. You come out here, you see the
14 greasewood, I would say about six to eight years ago
15 they were -- they were pretty bushy. But now that you
16 come here, they're pretty skeletal. That is a
17 significant detriment if we're losing our environmental
18 issues out here.

19 Again, this is a dog-eat-dog world, this is an
20 Elon Musk This, is General Motors, this is Apple, this
21 is LG. Right now, we do not have to go with this rat
22 race. We do not have to have a report, or have an
23 extension until October of 2023. I'm not even sure if
24 the public right here understand that the scientist gave
25 us insight that our temperature rose one and a half

1 degrees Celsius, which is the judgment of our climate.

2 So, now we're dealing with the climate.

3 You're extrapolating this huge metal inside of our
4 worlds, and I'm gonna say it again and reiterate this.

5 Who are we as mankind right now to come here and
6 extrapolate this type of metal and not speak and not run
7 to the Native Americans. I know that we're explicitly
8 saying that it's just this little part of the Imperial,
9 Calipatria, you know the other small towns. We're all
10 affected. How are we affected? This lithium is part of
11 the US. It's going to affect explicitly the state of
12 California and Arizona.

13 July 15th, I'm not sure who he was, but he had
14 given his presentation regarding the process of the
15 brine. And the process of the brine, from what I
16 remember, was some of it was going to condensate up into
17 the air and be brought into Phoenix. And with that
18 condensation of water in the air, again, where people
19 don't understand that our air is not free anymore.

20 So, whatever you're just extrapolating from
21 lithium, you're also taking other minerals that we're
22 not known to. And if you don't have those answers, then
23 how are we meeting a deadline to hand in a report
24 October 1st, when in fairness, I've sat in these
25 meetings and every time the question -- the public

1 brings the question to the panel, it's I'll get back to
2 you. I'll get back to you on that. That's not how we -
3 - we need more answers.

4 I don't see the relationship with many tribes
5 other than Torres Martinez or the Quechan tribe. There
6 has to be more indigenous involvement with these panels.
7 And -- let's see what -- I wrote down some stuff.

8 These are state officials, like Governor
9 Newsom, Biden. Again, I said that this is Biden, this
10 is Elon Musk. These are all tycoon investors who are
11 seeking this metal brine, this this new white gold, and
12 it's lithium. That can power electric cars and -- I'm
13 seeing more nuclear. I'm seeing nuclear weapons for the
14 military. I mean, it's not just for cars and laptops
15 and this and that, it's higher than that. So why are we
16 pushing this higher?

17 When I was talking about the degrees going up
18 1.5 degrees Celsius, the people don't even understand
19 what the detriment of that is. And how our world is
20 shifting. So, when the scientists came out and notified
21 the public that, which most don't know, and then now
22 we're going to extract the lithium, and we don't have
23 those answers, then how are we going forth on this -- on
24 these decisions?

25 I need to see more involvement with the Native

1 Americans, the Indigenous, environmental. You guys are
2 saying everything's great for education, but I haven't
3 seen you guys around the Native American people. I
4 haven't seen the Native American legislator. Where's
5 the UN here? Where's Secretary Haaland? You know, if
6 we're going to talk about all these people, and you guys
7 are doing the work for them, bring them down here.
8 Bring Gavin Newsom down here, bring Haaland down here,
9 because Haaland is the one that ultimately helps speak
10 for the Native Americans. And why is this being pushed?

11 CHAIR PAZ: A reminder, we have a time limit,
12 and I lost track just listening to -- but I do want to
13 mention that we do have a two-minute limit. So, if you
14 want to wrap up with thoughts?

15 MS. NIERENHAUSEN: Sure.

16 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

17 MS. NIERENHAUSEN: Thank you.

18 Again, this Warren Buffett, is it Warren
19 Buffett? The Berkshire Hathaway, he's one of the main
20 prospectors for this California lithium. And as well as
21 the Dutch banks and the Goldman Sachs. That's huge for
22 you people to know this.

23 The lithium is also going for the energy
24 storage systems, which means it's for your WiFi, your --
25 the internet storage systems. Extracting lithium

1 chloride from geothermal brine, that's new. Converting
2 lithium chloride into battery grade lithium hydroxide.
3 Australia based lithium extraction project will have
4 first rights on lithium produced by the first stage.
5 That's what you guys are talking about. Thank you.

6 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

7 Just want to reflect that there were a lot of
8 thought-forming philosophical questions that were coming
9 up as I was listening. And I hope that there is a way
10 that the report can grapple with that. Thank you.

11 Is there anyone here in Calipatria wishing to
12 make a public statement?

13 Okay, I will now turn to the members of the
14 public joining us via Zoom. And a reminder that we have
15 a two-minute time limit. Erica?

16 MS. LOZA: Just as a reminder, if you're
17 joining us via Zoom on the computer, please use the
18 raise-hand feature. If you've called in, please dial
19 star-nine to raise your hand and star-six to unmute your
20 phone line. Okay, the first hand raised I see is Carmen
21 Lucas, you should be able to unmute yourself.

22 MS. LUCAS: Yes, good afternoon. My name is
23 Carmen Lucas, I'm a Kwaaymii Indian from the Laguna
24 mountains. I'm somewhat disgusted with this
25 conversation on the public side, or the official side of

1 the house. That seems like you're spending money before
2 you even have it in your pocket. I made comment here a
3 couple of weeks ago with some folks up there at Torres
4 Martinez.

5 It seems to me our earth is our prime
6 ingredient and it belongs to the Creator. And one of
7 the oldest gifts out of that earth is the clay. And
8 it's the clay that you're trying to extract, the
9 lithium. I know that lithium is also used in mental
10 health. So, I often wonder if you're trying to balance
11 out these energy apparatuses that the public is so
12 addicted to.

13 I would caution you, I'm not an expert, I just
14 look at this and think we're making a tragic mistake
15 here. The earth belongs to all of us through our
16 Creator. We have an obligation to take care of it, not
17 to desecrate it.

18 So, I really want to be on record that you
19 should not be looking at spending money that you don't
20 have, and that you think you're gonna have. Even if you
21 extract the lithium, it's gonna take all our water. I
22 keep hearing the public officials on the news saying,
23 "We need more housing, more low-cost housing. Oh, by
24 the way, shut your faucet off. There's not enough
25 water." I think I understood that it's gonna take water

1 to process this lithium and anything else that comes out
2 of that earth. Where's that water coming from?

3 Again the earth, the air, the water, all these
4 things, the fire within, are sacred elements. We have
5 an obligation to take care of it. We have an obligation
6 to keep things in balance. Thank you.

7 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Do we have somebody
8 else on Zoom wishing to make public comment?

9 MS. LOZA: Yes, we have a phone number ending
10 in 839. You should be able to unmute your phone line.

11 MS. VANFLEET: Yeah, this is Rena van Fleet
12 with the Colorado River Indian tribes, Tribal Historic
13 Preservation Office. And you know in this (BACKGROUND
14 DIALOGUE)

15 Excuse me?

16 MS. LOZA: Go ahead.

17 MS. VANFLEET: Can you hear me?

18 MS. LOZA: Yes.

19 MS. VANFLEET: Okay. Like I said, Rena van
20 Fleet, Colorado River Indian tribes, Tribal Historic
21 Preservation office. I'm a Mojave. And a little
22 history on the Salton Sea. It was originally the Salton
23 Sink. It is one of the largest habitat for all Native
24 people, for our birds, and our animals. You know, in
25 listening to the conversation, I agree that, you know,

1 studies need to be done. And if they were done, we'd
2 like to have a copy. Especially of the Salton Sea
3 Management Plan that was mentioned earlier.

4 You know, the Salton Sea is a result of the
5 Colorado River and the Gila River. Now you know, we
6 have stories and songs that go to that area. But you
7 know, all our animals that our Creator created, our
8 animals and our birds to do specific things in this
9 world. And, you know, the Salton Sea does contain clay.
10 And clay was used by our people, the Mojave, for our
11 ceramic ware. We actually made a lot of -- before
12 everything became developed in that area, that was our
13 stuff.

14 Also, going to the California to barter for
15 beads or whatever. But we have a lot of history there.
16 And you know, you're not going to find our history,
17 Native American history, in a textbook or in a
18 classroom. So, it's real important that the tribes be
19 involved, especially with the one of six
20 (phonetic) 1:50:20.

21 I agree that I think lithium should be used in
22 the medical field. For Alzheimer's, any other disease
23 that it can cure. Because, you know, you see some of
24 these cars that are electric. Pretty soon, you're gonna
25 still have electric and hybrid, I mean hybrid cars that

1 are electric and gas. So, you know, it's not really a
2 big improvement.

3 But, you know, I agree, you know, that the
4 studies need to be done. The actual, I guess, studies
5 on whether lithium, this lithium, the amount you can
6 extract. But, you know, we're all about progress, but
7 you have to remember -- before that little line was
8 drawn on a piece of paper saying, "This is your
9 reservation," the native people were all in that area.
10 Mojave, people have been in that area since time
11 immemorial.

12 And so, you know, it's important that tribal
13 consultation be done. And you know, and I know that for
14 the Colorado River Tribes Kipple (PHONETIC) office, we
15 are going to ask for consultation. And it'll be on one
16 to one, as the law says. So, I just wanted to point
17 that out.

18 Each one of these animals each one of our
19 birds that the Creator created has a specific role in
20 this -- on this planet. And, you know, with that being
21 said, you know, the migratory birds you know, they use
22 the Salton Sea to rest during their journey. So, there
23 are going to be impacts, a lot of impacts. And I'm just
24 concerned about the clay that is there. And, of course,
25 that artifacts that will be found in the Salton Sea.

1 Because, you know, living along -- the tribes that lived
2 along the Colorado River, many have the artifacts may
3 have been-- may have gone down the river and they may
4 be at the bottom of the Salton Sea.

5 So --

6 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you for your comments.

7 (Ms. Van Fleet and Chair Paz simultaneously
8 speaking)

9 CHAIR PAZ: -- the time, could you wrap up
10 your comment please.

11 MS. VANFLEET: I thought I was unmuted.

12 CHAIR PAZ: Yes, I --

13 MS. VANFLEET: Hello?

14 CHAIR PAZ: Just (INDISCERNIBLE)

15 MS. VANFLEET: Hello?

16 CHAIR PAZ: Yes, this is Chair Paz, if you can
17 hear me, just sharing a reminder that the time has ended
18 and I'm inviting you to give us your final thoughts.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. VAN FLEET: Okay. (INDISCERNIBLE)

21 CHAIR PAZ: Erica? If there are other public
22 comments, we can take them. I do want to remind members
23 of the public that the comments we are taking right now
24 are related to the budget presentation that was given.
25 It's not our other -- we'll have general comments with

1 the item with regards to lithium extraction itself or
2 the report, there is a section later in the agenda. The
3 people who didn't can comment on those.

4 So, a reminder for comments right now. If you
5 can please keep them to comments related to the budget
6 presentation that was given. Thank you.

7 Erica, back to you.

8 MS. LOZA: Thank you. We do have two written
9 comments in Spanish. So, if I can have one of the
10 interpreters jump into the English channel for everyone.
11 And if you can translate the Spanish comment into
12 English for us?

13 If I can have Janet or Lydia jump into the
14 English channel to translate the Spanish comments?

15 TRANSLATOR: This is Lydia, can you hear me?

16 MS. LOZA: Yes.

17 TRANSLATOR: Okay. My name is -- this is from
18 Dora c. Tapia. "My name is Cecilia Armenta, a resident
19 and representative of the Salton City. My question is
20 about impacts of this lithium extraction, and how it
21 will help our community of Salton City. We also want to
22 be included in these improvements for all our
23 communities, especially mine, Salton city. Please be
24 clear and honest with all the people that we have
25 regarding the issue of lithium mining, as we ask for a

1 clear and responsible report for the whole community."

2 The next comment -- the next part is, "I also
3 want to know how this is going to affect the public
4 health, and the -- and the pets. And if you could just
5 be clear. If you don't have answers to my questions, if
6 you could put a representative that can clear these
7 questions for me."

8 MS. LOZA: Thank you. Those are all the
9 public comments. Back to you, Chair Paz.

10 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. (INDISCERNIBLE) these
11 topics. When we're creating the agenda, we think
12 they're light topics, we really do. But there are so
13 many things that come up. And so, I don't want to
14 assume that our next topic is going to be light. And we
15 still have a very important topic on -- that was listed
16 for later on the schedule of the report. So, if that's
17 okay, I just want to check with legal at the Energy
18 Commission that I can switch the orders so that we can
19 go right now to slide 31. And this does -- you know the
20 schedule and the public process around the report. And
21 then if time allows us, we can come back to where we
22 are.

23 MS. DYER: Hi Chair Paz, this is Deborah. And
24 yes, you can move items around in the agenda.

25 CHAIR PAZ: Okay. So, we're going to go to

1 slide number 31. And again, where do we go -- I want to
2 start where we are right now. We are five weeks away
3 from the statutory date. Right? The October date that
4 we have for delivery of the report to the legislature.
5 So that's October 1st.

6 I really do not know -- outside of everything
7 else that's going to be discussed, I don't know if that
8 deadline can be met where we are right now. And that's
9 the way I want to open this conversation with my
10 Commissioners, so that you can help me think about a way
11 in which we can get to a report that we can all feel
12 like it's complete, and where the community can feel
13 that they had ample time to review it, and to ensure
14 that their feedback has been reflected on that report.
15 And I think those are two very important things that we
16 need to do for this report.

17 At the end of our last meeting, there was a
18 motion by Commissioner Castaneda recommending that we
19 submit the report after the October deadline in order to
20 provide an opportunity for engagement with public
21 stakeholders and tribes on the draft report. There was
22 a motion. That motion was seconded, but then we lost
23 quorum so we are sort of starting the conversation I
24 think all fresh, knowing that we are five weeks away.

25 And one of the things that I've discussed with

1 the Energy Commission is for them to help us think about
2 what we should be considering when, for example, I come
3 and I ask them to do a more robust in person engagement
4 from the community so that instead of having the
5 traditional written comment period, that maybe the CEC
6 can support us and go around certain communities around
7 the Salton Sea region, and have more maybe personal,
8 more accessible conversations where they can talk,
9 discuss the report, and take oral public feedback.

10 That's one of the requests that I had made.
11 So that one, we can expand the voices that we hear from
12 and we don't limit them to those who feel comfortable
13 with the written comment period itself. I understand
14 that that takes time. So, I do want to invite I think
15 Deanna to just, before we open the conversation about
16 the process, to you know, share with us what are some of
17 the considerations that we need to be thinking about as
18 we try to put a deadline to when this report can be
19 completed.

20 (INDISCERNIBLE)

21 MS. CARRILLO: Thank you, Chair Paz. As you'd
22 asked the CEC to explore different approaches and
23 opportunities, there's a few things that we consider in
24 our standard process of reviewing documents and
25 stakeholder engagement. I think one is translation,

1 especially some of the things that we've been hearing in
2 this community about wanting to make sure that
3 information is accessible. And so, to take a say 60 to
4 80 page report and translate it, it could take up to two
5 weeks, maybe longer just for those logistics. So just
6 something to consider for time.

7 We have received some requests from the
8 community-based organizations to provide both weekends,
9 evenings, and other opportunities for participation,
10 with advance notice of over two weeks so that they can
11 work to get the information out on events and locations
12 to improve accessibility. Some other things that we've
13 heard or have considered of comments submitted to the
14 docket, like you've mentioned, is that information be
15 provided directly in simpler language. Or, in langua--
16 with fact sheets and other information. So, the
17 development of those fact sheets might also take time.

18 I think from a standard -- another thing to
19 consider, as the state focuses on patent process, just a
20 demonstration of the best practice that we might have is
21 to not only hold public comment on a draft, but also
22 public comment on a final version. So, something to
23 consider.

24 There is a compilation of public comments that
25 the Commissioners may be interested in the CEC doing, to

1 summarize those comments for you for consideration and
2 incorporation to a draft. That could take time,
3 depending on the robustness or the diversity of those
4 comments. And the Commissioners themselves will need to
5 think through how they want to discuss the report,
6 consider the recommendations, and fine tune those.

7 Whether that's broadly, or whether there is an
8 anticipation of getting line-item edits from a number of
9 Commissioners.

10 So, there's some things that the Commission
11 can consider as it thinks about next steps.

12 CHAIR PAZ: So, for clarification, Deanna,
13 trying to look in my calendar and see something down two
14 weeks translation, weekend, evening. So, say that the
15 report is out in a week. So, next week, by the 31st.
16 It will only be in English.

17 MS. CARRILLO: Correct.

18 CHAIR PAZ: But that would start the public
19 comment period.

20 MS. CARRILLO: It could, yup.

21 CHAIR PAZ: So within -- but we probably
22 couldn't have the community meeting until the Spanish
23 version is out there, so that we can have both an
24 English and a Spanish. So that would be September 14,
25 two weeks by when we would have the report. But then

1 the community wants to read-- well, maybe we can give
2 them the anticipated date now.

3 MS. CARRILLO: We can schedule it in advance.

4 CHAIR PAZ: We can schedule it ahead. So, say
5 that by the 14th, we can have those community meetings.
6 And we can have -- do you anticipate -- I would imagine
7 that once you're here, you want to do them three, you
8 know, consecutively. Go to one community one day,
9 another, another, another, another. Or, would it be
10 multiple trips from people in Sacramento to come and do
11 that? How would that work?

12 MS. CARRILLO: I would -- cost effectiveness
13 is always a priority for any public servant. But we
14 could schedule them over a series of days. I would look
15 to the Commission of what makes the most sense for the
16 community, whether that be a weeknight or a morning.

17 We would want at least 10-days notice for
18 those meetings. We would want to consider if they're
19 hybrid meetings, remote and in person, or just in
20 person. That 10-days notice will help with our -- if
21 any Commissioners want to attend for that public
22 comment, so that's a legal requirement.

23 CHAIR PAZ: So, assuming we're going to have
24 the report by the 14th, then we want to be ready to go.
25 We can public Notice then. I mean we have the 10 days

1 right now.

2 DC: Yup.

3 CHAIR PAZ: we can public Notice them.

4 And then it takes some time for you all to
5 take all that and report it in the report either -- I
6 don't know how you all either incorporate things that
7 were missing, or reflect that public comment was
8 received, and have all the public comment documented
9 that as part of the report.

10 DC: Yeah. The Lithium Valley Commission, as
11 a Commission, will want to contemplate the report, and
12 as well as the public comment to see what modifications
13 that might want to make. So, there will probably be a
14 Lithium Valley Commission meeting in there to both a.
15 talk about the report, or -- and/or a meeting to talk
16 about the public comment and those references

17 CHAIR PAZ: So, at the end of September,
18 ideally, we could have that meeting. If the public
19 meetings happened on the 14th, 15th, 16th. I'm being
20 aggressive here.

21 DC: Yeah,

22 CHAIR PAZ: Just putting it out there.

23 DC: Well, and one question -- are we
24 modifying the report to incorporate the things we've
25 heard today? Which is an internal process that not only

1 requires translation, but also ADA compliance of any
2 images. And we are working hard to get through that
3 (INDISCERNIBLE)

4 CHAIR PAZ: The things we've heard today we've
5 heard in the past. So, I don't know -- if they're not
6 in the draft will they need to be added. But --

7 DC: Yeah.

8 CHAIR PAZ: -- they're not new because they
9 came out today. I don't know that we've heard anything
10 new, new today. Unless, well. So, assuming that it's
11 not going to be that lengthy -- and I did have an
12 opportunity to read the draft and give some comments and
13 I know you're working on those.

14 Let me just wrap this and then I'll hand it
15 over. But I'm just trying to get us on this aggressive
16 timeline that would still have us miss the deadline.
17 But if by the end of September this Commission can then
18 have our own conversation -- and what I'm suggesting is
19 that we have a facilitated discussion, so that we can
20 then be able to talk about the things we heard during
21 public comment, things that maybe are in the re-- are
22 not in the report that we wish were on the report.

23 And I think it's really going to take all of
24 us reading that report and adding your expertise.

25 Right? Which is the value in that. In reading the

1 draft myself. that's what I felt on cycle. You know,
2 having this -- the Commissioners here provide maybe that
3 analysis in their areas of expertise would make the
4 report more robust.

5 So, assuming we can have that facilitated
6 conversation by the end of September, and then whatever
7 time, maybe we're looking November, December. But that
8 15 day, public comment period would give us enough time
9 to do it all?

10 MS. CARRILLO: Can I ask a few clarifying
11 questions since we're looking at calendars remotely? I
12 think what I heard, just to confirm, is that the goal
13 with the report being out next week. For target dates
14 we're looking at, I think we said September. I heard
15 September 1st. Assuming a two-week translation period.
16 So, let's say posting of the Spanish version out on the
17 16th. Then community -- we'd want people to be able to
18 read that report before the community meetings.

19 So, we would likely have the community
20 meetings maybe 22nd through the 24th, potentially,
21 depending on how many site locations we're thinking of
22 and where. We'd also -- I would recommend also having
23 an online session so folks can attend in person. There
24 is an avenue. The competition of those oral comments
25 will likely take time, as well as written comments.

1 And so, I think having a Commission meeting to
2 talk about the report the month of September is
3 reasonable. I don't -- I don't know if we will have the
4 time to compile those oral comments for you, and that we
5 could probably provide transcripts or other elements
6 where the Commissioner's received more -- less distilled
7 information and direct source information. And that
8 will probably -- that's pretty quick.

9 CHAIR PAZ: And then we're looking to
10 potentially finalize things November, December. So,
11 there is -- if you were able to follow along, a
12 potential road map that again, I think as aggressive as
13 we want to be we're still -- I don't see us meeting the
14 October 1st deadline from where we are. And since we --
15 looking where we are at now, just taking the time to
16 have that public input is important.

17 And it's not going to take us too far after
18 the deadline. And I -- and one point of clarification
19 now before I turn it to my colleagues to react on what
20 they're hearing or propose something different, is that
21 the review period, right, or the way I'm seeing --
22 first, the way this report is being written, it's not a
23 yay/nay report, right? It's not -- that's not what the
24 legislature asked us to do.

25 The legislature didn't ask us to say yes to

1 lithium, or no to lithium. The legislature asked us to
2 do research so that we can uplift what considerations,
3 right? As the state is continuing to move forward
4 towards this lithium development, that we could have an
5 opportunity to bring different perspectives, and analyze
6 them, and then put out there -- these are the things
7 that we feel confident, the community feels confident,
8 you need to consider as to move forward.

9 But it is not the public comment period. I
10 think it's also not a place where we would be able even
11 to reopen some of the things that already were decided.
12 I mean, the budget was enacted, those things are in
13 motion. It's really about looking at the report and
14 ensuring that the proper analysis is there, that we're
15 connecting the dots, that we're uplifting the needs of
16 the community, and why it matters. Right? Like why is
17 this topic so critical, and sometimes creates tension in
18 communities like Imperial, the fence line communities,
19 and the communities surrounding, and our tribal
20 neighbors?

21 So, I think that's really the essence of the
22 public comment, for people to be able to give us input
23 and uplift if we didn't capture it right? You know,
24 that we can. But it's not, again, to come up with
25 other, you know, reopen what has already been enacted in

1 the legislature.

2 So, I just wanted to clarify those two things
3 because that's the way I'm seeing it, and I think it's
4 important to see that my fellow Commissioners are seeing
5 it in the same way, and then that we come up with a
6 potential path forward. So, I will step back and listen
7 and I know Mr. -- Commissioner Olmedo had requested to
8 speak, so I'll turn it over to you.

9 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Thank you, Madam Chair.
10 I am actually less concerned about the deadline, because
11 from the beginning we've asked for resources to be able
12 to have a report ready, and have the available
13 expertise. And I know that it exists within the Energy
14 Commission, but I'm also concerned about the biases that
15 may exist in developing a report solely by an agency who
16 also may be tasked with implementing a report. And who
17 are those who are put to the task of deciding what is a
18 priority, what isn't. You know?

19 Like the old saying says you know, dotting the
20 I and crossing the T, right. It's all these minor
21 things may be minor, depending on the eye of the
22 beholder. And, I do have concerns as to how those
23 priorities -- every community, every culture, every
24 stakeholder is going to find significance in their
25 comments, while others don't. And I do have concerns of

1 that.

2 And I happen to believe that every opinion and
3 every comment, including those today, need to be
4 considered. Even if they are thought about as
5 repetitive.

6 Just today I heard things from the tribal
7 member that really got me thinking. Is all these
8 communities asking for enough? Right? Because we'll
9 just start talking about, like, this stuff may go to
10 military weapons, or space exploration.

11 Who's getting shortchanged here? Is it our
12 community who's going to bear the burden, or shoulder
13 the risk, and provide a resource that gets underfunded?
14 We know that history, we know that they're great big
15 chances that these communities are going to take -- be
16 taken advantage. Right?

17 And that's the beauty about this Lithium
18 Commission, that it shouldn't be over when this report
19 is over. It needs to be a standing Commission. And I'm
20 actually very disappointed. I don't know if I myself
21 did enough to make sure that this became a standing
22 Commission moving forward, given that this is not the
23 first time or the last time that we have these
24 discussions. Or, would be the last method of extraction
25 that we might have to look at in the entire state of

1 California.

2 You know, it's like anything, it's gonna be
3 driven by market forces and, you know, consumer
4 behaviors, and policies just like we're seeing, right?
5 And many other things that probably not even thinking
6 about. So, you know, I'm grateful to all the work and
7 the effort that the CEC is making. I just want to make
8 sure that the community does, just like Madam Chair here
9 mentioned, that they do have enough time to see the
10 entire product before it gets narrowed down.

11 We do -- I mean, how do you do that? I think
12 that the best way they should have -- and I know like
13 we're in a place like we should have, we could have, but
14 we didn't, right? So, it's not the CEC's fault, I
15 assume. I mean, it's maybe the design of the policy
16 itself wasn't kind of thinking about these nuances that
17 we -- that should have been in there.

18 But I do feel that this report is critical. I
19 know that the first day, I think I don't know if it was
20 a public meeting or not, but I kind of gave a list --
21 hey, we need all these things. And that's just because
22 I've sat in similar type of boards and advisories, and
23 we've gone through the same challenges.

24 And I know at that time it was kind of thought
25 about. And I remember -- I don't remember exact word

1 for this, but it was like we got it. Right? But here
2 we are today. No, I don't think we have it. Because
3 there's going to be things that I think are going to be
4 left out and I'm very concerned that the community's
5 voice -- and I know wouldn't be intentional. I believe
6 that it wouldn't be intentional, but I do want to make
7 sure that our community has significant amount of
8 consultation, that tribes who is very good at advocating
9 for themselves, you know.

10 I know that there's federal and state effort
11 to assure that tribes are consulted, but we hear that
12 and still not enough. Right? And I would say that that
13 goes across the board that it's not enough, and I'm
14 concerned that we have a report that isn't truly
15 reflective of the community where they're at, and what
16 they were trying to communicate. And the unknowns. I
17 heard today again, what -- there's so many unknowns that
18 we don't know. Right?

19 The industry might know them, but a lot of it
20 is not being fully transparent, because they perhaps had
21 the right to be non-transparent. Right? They --
22 they're protecting their investment. You know, maybe
23 it's -- there's proprietary ownership. Hey, who am I to
24 argue that? You know, it's their business.

25 But at the end of the day, then what protects

1 us in our community, and those who have been coming up
2 here and stating their concerns. All of that is a
3 mathematical formula. And I just want to make sure that
4 at the end of the day, this report doesn't come up with
5 calculations that are lopsided against, or not equitable
6 or not fair for the community. Right?

7 We're dealing with a lot of unknowns. And I
8 been growing used to just because of the space we work
9 on, that I work on with my colleagues who are here, and
10 I know other you know colleagues that work in similar
11 things, is that, you know, the community a lot of times
12 isn't going to have the technical language to share.
13 What are we doing to translate that concern into
14 technical language? Because they're, they're explaining
15 that. You know? They're experts in the community, and
16 the concerns that they have. What are we doing to
17 translate that concern into technical language so that
18 it makes sense, you know, in assuring that everybody's
19 interest is protected? Right?

20 So, you know, it'd be the best possible
21 outcome is that everybody wins, right? And, and so how
22 do we get there? So, I'm just thinking ahead, that
23 those might be some, some shortfalls and some biases
24 that we need to really think ahead of how do we address
25 them? Right?

1 So, but I am thankful to the work that the CEC
2 does, to the work of the Commissioners, and the Chair
3 and her leadership here. So, it's not -- not trying to
4 beat down this, this effort that was unfunded. Right?
5 But and all the work that everybody's put in, cause I
6 know that sometimes it might feel like -- I spent long
7 hours trying to do this, no sleep. I get it, I know,
8 you have. But we still -- this is a very vulnerable
9 communities, the communities we're dealing with, very
10 vulnerable, disadvantaged. And I want to make sure that
11 we -- in the spirit of where we are today about equity
12 and justice, that we think about those things before
13 this report gets out.

14 And if a recommendations need to occur about,
15 that we need a little more flexibility, right? Then
16 maybe that's something we need to think about too. I
17 also know that many are probably depending on this
18 report to, for their own decisions that they have to
19 make.

20 So, but we have to -- we have to -- I don't
21 like to use the word balance, because balance will still
22 create inequities. Right? It's like saying we need
23 equality. Right? And equality doesn't always translate
24 into fairness. Right? Because some are much further in
25 a position as advantaged as others.

1 So how do we bring equity into this process?

2 And I'd like for that to be a continued conversation, I
3 guess, off and on these meetings. And I'd like to hear
4 from the public to, you know, through public comments.

5 How can we make it better for the public, for the
6 communities that are concerned that, you know, this
7 might not be representative, they might not feel heard.
8 Right? And the best thing that I feel that I can do in
9 this seat, is give you a voice. Right? Give the
10 community a voice, those online, offline and out here.

11 So, we got a lot of work to do, I guess
12 together, all of us. And including the community to
13 figure out the best, the best way that we can put the
14 best possible report forward, with the best possible
15 recommendations that we all can live with. Thank you.

16 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Anybody else here, any
17 other Commissioner? Vice Chair Kelley?

18 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: So, I got the - I got
19 the idea. You're going to need more time. And I can
20 agree to that, except I need to know what the end date
21 is. I think you have to work backwards. So, you've
22 asked about two weeks, maybe, for translation. Two
23 weeks for consolidating comments, and I also heard about
24 circulating a draft and then circulating a final. Is
25 that a past practice or is that a recommendation?

1 MS. CARRILLO: Let me just clarify. I was
2 asked to raise issues for consideration for your
3 deliberation. So, it is not an advocacy role. No, I
4 just wanted to clarify, because this is -- you know, you
5 are the deciding body.

6 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: But, if you could give
7 us, based off of what you've put in place, of extending
8 the times, what that end date would be? And I hear
9 about the idea of continuing the Lithium Valley
10 Commission, but I believe that we are coming to a point
11 where it should end, actually. Because there is
12 important work to do that's already been initiated, and
13 it will engage the community and the public.

14 And so, that's my point of view, is that it's
15 come to its end of life. That these recommendations,
16 and again, and one of the important things that is of
17 the mandate is in (indiscernible) to the potential
18 incentives for development. And I think over the course
19 of our conversations, we have leaned too far towards one
20 of the other mandates, is to see the impacts on
21 community, right?

22 But, I know Luis mentioned he doesn't like the
23 word balance. But balance is actually a good thing,
24 because without one you don't have the other. You can't
25 tilt too far in one direction on the seesaw, or you're

1 just sitting on the ground.

2 CHAIR PAZ: I can give you an answer, because,
3 yeah, Deanna is not making a recommendation. But as
4 Deanna and I have been talking about how do we do this
5 to get the input and have the time, what seemed like a
6 possibility would be December, a December deadline. So,
7 and I do agree, having at least that be our aim, right,
8 it's like by December, then we can plan backwards and
9 say -- "the report is issued tomorrow, and it's -- let's
10 go running," so that we can be done by December.

11 MS. CARRILLO: I also noticed the Commission
12 makes a commitment to spend some time with me over the
13 holidays, for December, potentially.

14 CHAIR PAZ: I'd like to think that's changing
15 my mind. But yeah, that is a potential consideration.
16 And thinking about December, preferably before mid-
17 December, early December. So, are there any other --
18 and let me just tell you one other thing, because I hear
19 the comments that Commissioner Olmedo makes about the
20 importance of capturing everything. And again, because
21 I've had the privilege of reviewing the draft, what I
22 can tell you is that everything that we've heard is
23 there to the extent that the analysis exists and that we
24 want to see it differently in our conversations and
25 whether the community or the tribes feel that their

1 voices were accurately captured, that's what will
2 require the time.

3 But I did, you know, I did read a lot of it,
4 and a lot of it's there. My feedback there was that we
5 do need more analysis and that's where I think you all,
6 on this dais, reading it and adding that. And the
7 concern or the reaction from the CEC was actually to
8 prevent what Commissioner Olmedo was saying. It's like,
9 well we don't -- we are aware that we are the Energy
10 Commission and we don't want to give a biased analysis.

11 And so when I read the draft, I'm like, oh,
12 there's missing this, there's missing that, right? Like
13 how do we go deeper into some of these issues. And I
14 think that's where your expertise is going to be needed
15 on different sections of the report to ensure that we're
16 fully connecting the dots and calling out why all this
17 matters, right? When we're talking about the
18 development of lithium. And again, it's equally
19 important for the community and all of us sitting here
20 that we have the time to do that. So yeah, December is a
21 potential that I'm putting on the table right now for
22 consideration.

23 Commissioner Castaneda?

24 COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: Thank you, Madam
25 Chair. Appreciate the discussion on this. I guess my

1 question would be, technically, the report, even though
2 it would be draft, and there's a number of things that
3 need to be done, including more, you know public
4 outreach and engagement. But the draft itself would be
5 issued prior to October 1. Is that an accurate
6 understanding?

7 CHAIR PAZ: If I heard you correctly, yes the
8 draft itself will be circulated before October 1st.

9 COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: Okay. So, then we
10 would have obviously possession of it, we'd be able to
11 read it, we'd be able to, you know, understand what
12 additions or changes we individually or collectively
13 would want to make. And then obviously we would go
14 through the process of review and translations and all
15 that kinds of things that we have been discussing.
16 Right? So. And if that's the case, then I'm fine.

17 CHAIR PAZ: Okay. Yes, what you said, yes.
18 Commissioner Weisgall?

19 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: I kind of came into
20 this meeting thinking that I'm reading the statute, and
21 the statute calls for a report. I -- the goal of our
22 commission is to -- and I'm reading from the legislative
23 analysis. It's to investigate the financial and policy
24 opportunities to bolster the opportunities to extract
25 lithium and support geothermal development.

1 As you said, Chair Paz, this is not lithium
2 yes or no. We've had 20 meetings, starting on February
3 25 of last year. They are awkward, because there's very
4 little give and take with the public. The public
5 comment period is reserved for that, public comments.
6 Not questions, seeking answers, not cross-examination of
7 panelists or Commissioners. And clearly that has caused
8 frustration.

9 But I think we can overcome that. I think
10 it's important to have -- and I'm glad you asked the
11 question, Commissioner Castaneda. I think if there is a
12 report out by October 1, we can call it interim, we can
13 call it draft. We can then spend time, which we'll be
14 spending before October 1 and then after October 1, to
15 hold community meetings, to get more local input.
16 Although, as I've said, we've had 20 meetings already.

17 The report is not -- the purpose of the report
18 is not necessarily or not exclusively to reflect public
19 comments. We have been given, I believe, nine specific
20 tasks to analyze. Methods of advanced procurement of
21 geothermal power, the value of geothermal projects
22 through integration of emerging technologies and the
23 value of lithium extraction -- I'm reading from the law.
24 Methods of overcoming technical and economic challenges,
25 safe environmental methods for lithium extraction, the

1 importance of federal and state investments, the
2 application of state, local, and federal incentives, the
3 development of tracking system for lithium projects,
4 reports from state regulators on the status of
5 permitting, training on lithium extraction, and I think,
6 I mean I've shortened it, but those are the nine points
7 in the legislation.

8 I think we have enough information on those
9 nine points to file a report. Call it interim, call it
10 draft, whatever. We've had presentations on all of
11 these topics. We know there is a lot of community
12 concern, outright opposition. I don't think we've
13 learned anything new about that opposition today, I mean
14 I realize someone wanted to talk about space
15 exploration.

16 But I think that the basic concerns, we know
17 about. That doesn't mean that we don't need more robust
18 interaction. I think we do, and we need to reflect
19 those public comments, even though we've already had
20 many both in person and quite a few filed in the docket.
21 I'm not worried about bias from the Energy Commission,
22 because it's our report. So, if we as Commissioners see
23 a bias, we clarify that, we correct that, because it's
24 our report.

25 So, I initially was going to say, look, we get

1 something in by October 1, that's what the law says.
2 And we could -- I mean, I was -- it was going to be kind
3 of a compromise I would suggest, which maybe is where
4 we're going. There will be a draft or an interim
5 report.

6 We can have as many meetings as we want, and
7 should have more meetings with community members,
8 because the structure of our Commission has made that
9 difficult. We did have that one community meeting, but
10 god, we all went on too long ourselves talking, and
11 there wasn't really enough time to have that
12 interaction. But we can do that at any time, and we
13 could issue a subsequent report.

14 So, I guess I'm amenable to what you're
15 suggesting, with one very strong caveat. And that is
16 not December. It's December 1.

17 I can guarantee you, after December 1, this
18 will then stretch into January, we'll have more requests
19 for comments, Q&A, and this could go on indefinitely.
20 So, instead of Oct -- you know, I think October 1 for an
21 interim report, making very clear that there will be a
22 final report by December 1, is something that I would
23 support. Thanks.

24 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Jonathan. And I do not
25 disagree with any of the points that you have made. We

1 have had all these meetings. I think the question is,
2 what kind of a report are we comfortable submitting, and
3 none of you have seen the draft report yet. So, your
4 thoughts might change once you read the report. Or
5 maybe I'm just being a Type-A perfectionist and want to
6 see everything. And you all tell me, you know, Silvia,
7 just let it go, this is fine and we can submit it.

8 And so, I'm speaking from that advantage, that
9 I did read the report, and it's not just the public
10 comment or the tribal comment that I was paying
11 attention to. I was also looking at the other more
12 technical aspects. Like the meeting when we discussed
13 geothermal and what has been limiting geothermal in the
14 Imperial County, right?

15 And I felt that could, based on my own
16 experience growing up here, and then engaging in my work
17 in the legislature with some of these issues, knowing,
18 like okay, this could be a little more robust and maybe
19 we're going to depend on IID or others to take it there.
20 Right? Because they're local. So that it doesn't read
21 as just a matter of fact report, but it's really being
22 from here, and I think many people might agree, it's
23 like it's the gravity of this is important and we need
24 to communicate it rather --

25 So, I think once you read the report, again,

1 you may or may not agree with me. But I was looking at
2 all the aspects, not only the community and the tribal,
3 but also some of the more technical. And also the
4 historical you know, challenges that we face. The
5 infrastructure, all of the topics we've discussed. And
6 how we communicate that?

7 It's not that they're not in the report, it's
8 just that maybe we can communicate it in a way that
9 really drives it home for many of the legislators that
10 are going to be making decisions for this community, so
11 that they can understand what's at stake. So that they
12 can understand why we need the dollars. So.

13 But I can accept your compromise of December
14 1st, and then we can work with the CEC to get it then.

15 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: And one last comment
16 there. Do not -- please do not misinterpret anything
17 I'm saying. I think every member of this Commission
18 feels very strongly about the need for robust community
19 input and to hear those concerns. That is definitely
20 part of the report. The other part you outlined, the
21 technical points and what we're supposed to cover.

22 So, this is not in any way designed to either
23 cut off or short circuit that process. If anything, I
24 think what we're talking about is getting around to some
25 of those real community meetings that we had -- of which

1 we had one, but of which we need more. So, just want to
2 clarify that point. Thanks very much.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Yeah, thank you. Commissioner
4 Dolega?

5 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: Yeah, just had a couple
6 questions. And I think mainly I would echo most of
7 Jonathan was just saying. The due date of October 1st -
8 - so two questions. When is the draft going to be
9 released? Was that next week?

10 CHAIR PAZ: The goal is next week, and we are
11 aiming at September 1st. Correct?

12 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: And so, is the idea that
13 we would have the month of September prior to October
14 1st to file or to keep -- sorry, getting some feedback
15 here. The -- we would still have the month to file
16 before that October 1st deadline, but the proposal is to
17 extend that to December 1st now. Is that correct?

18 CHAIR PAZ: We -- technically, we don't need
19 by law any permission to be late. We're just going to
20 be late. And it happens, reports are late. I just,
21 again, I want us to feel comfortable with what we're
22 turning in. And it's going to have my name on that
23 report, right? So, I want to feel comfortable.

24 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: Just one more question.
25 In terms of, you know, one of the items is the potential

1 for state, local, or federal incentives. Is there going
2 to be a portion of the report that talks about the
3 recently released budget plan and the potential impacts
4 of the excise tax on the lithium extraction and the
5 impacts of that?

6 CHAIR PAZ: There is a section in the report
7 that talks about the tax. Whether the analysis that
8 you're looking for is there or not, I think I will let
9 you, when you read it, to give us that feedback and
10 contribute to that piece.

11 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: Okay. Thank you.

12 CHAIR PAZ: I do not see any other hands up,
13 and I think we have at least a date out for aiming to
14 have this report out by December the first, or finalize
15 the report by December the first. Is that a timeline
16 that we can all get behind?

17 And I would need a motion at this point.

18 Oh no, no motion. We need to hear from the
19 public, I'm sorry. So, we need to go to public comment
20 before we get a motion. So, I will start here in
21 Calipatria. Please remember to state your name, spell
22 it out, your affiliation, and we have a two minute
23 public comment period. Thank you.

24 MS. FIGUEROA: Good afternoon. My name is
25 Janira Figueroa, representing Comite Civico del Valle.

1 With the legislative report deadline quickly
2 approaching, we ask that the Commission take these
3 considerations and recommendations for the report.

4 We would like to recognize that the 15-day
5 comment period is insufficient to properly inform the
6 public and reflect the priorities of surrounding
7 communities. As time is limited, we ask that the public
8 comment period of the draft report is extended to a
9 minimum of 20 days.

10 Secondly, we ask that the purpose of the
11 legislative report is clearly stated and explained for
12 the public to have a complete understanding. And
13 lastly, we ask that the public and community members are
14 allowed to provide input on this draft report through an
15 all-day meeting with the focus on the report.

16 Also, open dialogue discussion allotments have
17 been proven conductive to more conversation. Therefore,
18 as previously stated by Commissioner Weisgall, you know,
19 those meetings that are all day can be conducive for
20 discussion when you allow the public to have a back and
21 forth. And although you have provided public comment at
22 20 past meetings, the public needs to comment on the
23 draft findings specifically on the report. The public
24 can give comments like this one, but having the actual
25 draft report to actually read, review, and provide that

1 specific feedback is the essential portion. Thank you.

2 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. And Deanna, I don't
3 know if you can do the math quickly. But if we
4 circulated the report by September 1st, and I mean, I
5 think we have more than a 15-day comment period, maybe
6 even more than a 20-day comment period. But I'll let
7 you do the math and then we can come back, unless you
8 did it already.

9 MS. NAVA-FROELICH: Maria Nava-Froelich, City
10 of Calipatria. So, I just want to make sure that some
11 of the items that we discussed today are also going to
12 be addressed in the report. For (INDISCERNIBLE) if we
13 could get that study of the excise tax study, I'm not
14 sure if that's going to be able to make it inside the
15 report.

16 (INDISCERNIBLE) to talk a little bit about the
17 challenge about IID royalty taxes, if there's gonna be
18 any kind of follow up on that. So, we can make sure
19 that that's included. Also want to make sure that
20 clarification of the 30 percent go to the North End is
21 clarified. I know that there's some direct percentage
22 and indirect. But I'm sure, and Mr. Kelley talked about
23 it that the 30 percent's going to include.

24 Also, (INDISCERNIBLE) infrastructure. It's
25 (INDISCERNIBLE). So just wanted a little bit of

1 clarification. And then want to know if and when that
2 goes straight to the county, will there be continued
3 oversight on that? And is there going to be like a sub-
4 committee, an oversight committee or something? I just
5 want to know if we're going to be allowed to give some
6 kind of input.

7 I know that Mr. Kelley is visiting the
8 different communities and that he's going to be
9 (INDISCERNIBLE) or open to input in regards to some of
10 the projects that may have (INDISCERNIBLE). Which has
11 been crutch for (INDISCERNIBLE) but there is so much
12 more. Our infrastructure and other things that we want
13 to address here within the Calipat community, whole
14 community.

15 So with that said, I was just wondering if
16 that can also be included in some of those areas. That
17 we have (INDISCERNIBLE) too. Thank you.

18 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, Ms. Nava. And again,
19 to clarify, I think you've asked some questions that are
20 not in the -- we don't have the ability to make those
21 decisions in terms of oversight, continued oversight.
22 But in terms of what is captured on the report, right?
23 I mean, the report is going to capture all the comments
24 that we've heard so far under the topics that we've been
25 asked to analyze.

1 So, to the extent that, you know, a lot of the
2 comments you've made fall under those topics. They
3 should be reflected. And if they're not by the time you
4 see the draft, it doesn't mean that they went on deaf
5 ears, it's just -- let's bring it up again, and by the
6 time we get to the final, get to a point again where we
7 feel that everything that we've said is captured.

8 Any other public comment here in Imperial?

9 Oh, Calipatria, Imperial County.

10 MR. KELLEY: Good afternoon. Tim Kelley,
11 Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation. I
12 grew up just about a mile from here, and attended school
13 here at the high school. And for those that remember
14 this high school back then, many years ago it was --
15 there was an earthquake here, and it was decided to
16 demolish this high school. And we had a temporary high
17 school for about 40 years.

18 And so, what you're seeing today is a school
19 that was built with the taxes of our community, and the
20 taxes of the geothermal industry. And I think that's
21 very important, because this industry annually produces
22 \$3.9 million of taxes from Proposition 13, and plus
23 school bonds. And those bonds are what led to our
24 community being able to build the school like this.

25 Our job at IVEDC is to diversify our economy.

1 In Imperial County, we are predominantly an agriculture
2 area. We do have quite a bit of industry and industry
3 clusters that make up the workforce in our county.
4 Everything from logistics, manufacturing, and others.
5 But agriculture will always be a big part of our
6 economy, and it's changed quite a bit. As a matter of
7 fact, we've taken 15,000 acres of agriculture out of
8 production for geothermal. And still, we have land that
9 is vacant and not being farmed because of the economic
10 factors, and it's going to continue to change.

11 You've got an opportunity to make sure we
12 bring in other types of economies to our in Imperial
13 Valley. And one thing to look at is capturing an entire
14 supply chain. And so, with this industry, we look at
15 the industry cluster. We, first of all, had a
16 geothermal anomaly, we produce geothermal energy. Local
17 and (INDISCERNIBLE) produced geothermal overlay, with a
18 limitation of 15 megawatts. We have transmission that's
19 put on by the IID and others. And now, we have an
20 opportunity for mineral extraction. That will probably
21 happen. Zoning, permitting, financing are being put in
22 place and the expansion of 100 megawatts.

23 What we are not guaranteed, will be the
24 mineral conversion, the battery manufacturing, the
25 cathodes, the others. There's a global search to be

1 able to site these projects. We've got a limited time
2 to be able to site those in Imperial County. And if we
3 don't do that immediately, we're going to miss out.

4 That window of opportunity is closing, and
5 it's very important that we move forward and we show the
6 globe, this country, and others that we are serious
7 about this industry, we want it to move forward, we want
8 to create jobs, we want to generate taxes for our
9 community. Any time we delay is going to mean that
10 these companies that are looking at making investments
11 in Imperial County are going to go elsewhere, as they
12 are already considering.

13 You know about the companies that are
14 presently here. There's quite a few more, and there's
15 quite a few other companies looking. I'm working with
16 many of those companies, and I will tell you, they're
17 watching this very closely to see how this community
18 supports this industry, and whether we want to move
19 forward with attracting business here to the Imperial
20 County.

21 So, thank you very much.

22 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Is there anybody else
23 here in Calipatria? I think I see somebody else walking
24 to the podium.

25 MR. NAIMARK: Thank you. My name is Jared

1 Naimark, I'm the California Mining Organizer with
2 Earthworks. We're a nonprofit organization that works
3 to protect communities and the environment from the
4 adverse impacts of energy and mining development, while
5 promoting sustainable solutions.

6 We must transition as quickly as possible to
7 renewable energy. But for a truly just transition, we
8 can't simply replace dirty fossil fuels with dirty
9 mining. Instead, we should reduce the impacts on
10 communities by investing in recycling and reuse rather
11 than new extraction. Where the new lithium extraction
12 does occur, we have an opportunity to avoid repeating
13 the harms of the past, and instead meet the highest
14 standards for human rights, environmental protection,
15 and environmental justice.

16 These new projects must respect indigenous
17 communities right to free prior and informed consent,
18 including the right to say no. So, I ask that the
19 Commission include in the report and take seriously the
20 concerns raised in last month's tribal perspective
21 meeting, and the letters submitted by the Quechan Tribe
22 and others regarding the lack of consultation on lithium
23 development.

24 While direct lithium extraction from brine may
25 be lower impact than other forms of mining, it will

1 still have an impact. Earthworks has been reviewing the
2 literature and available planning documents. And we
3 believe there's several areas that need further
4 investigation, including possible impacts to air
5 quality, water consumption, seismic risk, and waste
6 management.

7 I know that these will be in the report, and
8 these impacts can be mitigated. But doing so requires
9 transparency. Independent information on these topics
10 should be made accessible to impacted communities, so
11 that they can make informed decisions on the future of
12 Imperial Valley and the region. Earthworks is happy to
13 assist in this effort.

14 So, given these two concerns, I support the
15 Commission's proposal to extend the report deadline to
16 December, and give the public as much time as possible
17 to review and comment on the draft report before it is
18 finalized. Thank you.

19 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

20 MS. RUIZ: Hi, good afternoon, Chair Paz and
21 fellow Commissioners. My name is Nilda Ruiz, I am a
22 resident of the Eastern Coachella Valley. Want to thank
23 the Lithium Valley Commission for taking the time and
24 opportunity to be able to discuss the process, the
25 public process around the release of the draft report.

1 I think you could have easily just gone ahead
2 and tried to go about going fifteen days getting
3 feedback, whatever feedback that could be, and moving
4 forward with, you know, sending over the report to the
5 legislation. But really appreciate that you take into
6 consideration that, you know, community is invested in
7 this and they want to be a part of the process and want
8 to be informed of what is going to be in this draft
9 report and provide feedback on it and show that their
10 feedback is incorporated.

11 I do support some of the previous comments of
12 extending the period, the public comment period, from 15
13 days to 20. I would even suggest maybe going the -- I'm
14 not entirely sure as to what the timeline is -- has been
15 that -- that is within what Deanna may had shared. But,
16 I would even suggest maybe 30 days, which I think is an
17 average public comment period whenever anything, when
18 any sort of report is released.

19 But I do agree at the minimum, 20 days, if
20 possible 30 days. And in regards to having all day
21 meetings, I'm not sure if it's -- there's currently
22 plans to have just one all day public meeting, but I
23 would recommend having multiple meetings at different
24 location sites. I'm not sure about how much they might
25 be able to fit in with the capacity of California Energy

1 Commission. But I -- we have previously mentioned this
2 before in previous comments, public comments, but one
3 meeting in the ECV, one in West Shores, and one or two
4 here within mainline Imperial County.

5 But overall, thank you for this opportunity to
6 make this public comment, and for your cooperation with
7 community organizations, community members, and
8 extending that final report deadline. Thank you.

9 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. I will now turn to
10 public comments on Zoom. And a reminder, we're taking
11 public comments on the submission of the report and the
12 process. So, if you can please limit your comments to
13 this topic. And reminder, we have two minutes. Erica?

14 MS. LOZA: Just as a reminder, please state
15 your name for the court reporter and for the audience.
16 And if you're joining us via zoom on the computer,
17 please use the raised-hand feature. If you've called
18 in, please dial star-nine to raise your hand and star-
19 six to unmute your phone line.

20 So, the first hand raised is Carmen Lucas, you
21 should be able to unmute yourself.

22 MS. COYLE: Hi there. Thank you. This is
23 actually Courtney Coyle. I'm an attorney for Carmen
24 Lucas, Kwaaymii Laguna Band of Indians. I wanted to
25 appreciate the Chair and Commissioner's serious

1 consideration of adjusting the time period and public
2 process for the report.

3 In addition to whatever individual government-
4 to-government forms of consultation that might be
5 requested, I think it might be good for there to be a
6 group tribal meeting after the draft report has been
7 read and we have an opportunity to read it, possibly
8 with appropriate CEC staff. And I don't know if it's a
9 subcommittee of the Commission.

10 Secondly, I also support the comment that I
11 believe I heard from the Chair on the opportunity to
12 potentially comment on both the draft and final reports.
13 This iterative approach is really appropriate for tribes
14 and consultation. We oftentimes have to make sure that
15 our issues have been translated and interpreted
16 correctly, especially with the cross-cultural issues and
17 the biases that one of the other Commissioners mentioned
18 that frequently do come into these reports, even if it's
19 not intended.

20 I also would want for the report to consider
21 why Indian tribes were not on the directly affected
22 communities list for the legislation. I wonder why that
23 is? Who was responsible for the legislation and the
24 language, and why weren't the tribal representatives
25 included in that.

1 Lastly, again, I want to lift up the issue of
2 the need for the southeast Lake Cahuilla Active Volcanic
3 Cultural District to be considered. This is the flip
4 side, the parallel universe, the upside down if you
5 will, of the geothermal anomaly. It's kind of one in
6 the same thing, and the Cultural District was actually
7 first. That needs to be identified and documented, the
8 tribal historic properties, prior to action being taken
9 on projects that could affect them. Tribes need access,
10 funding and time.

11 So hopefully the report will clearly look at
12 that. I want to thank you for the opportunity to
13 comment. Thank you.

14 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

15 MS. LOZA: Next hand raised is Stephanie
16 Martin. Then following would be Orlando Foote. So,
17 Stephanie, you should be able to unmute yourself.

18 MS. MARTIN: Thank you so much to the Lithium
19 Valley commission. And I just want to uplift the
20 attorney for Carmen Lucas, when she says that we need
21 to, as well as others, that we need to be able to ask
22 the public comment on the draft itself, so we may say
23 something new and relevant.

24 We also heard Chair Paz and Commissioner
25 Weisgall say public comment shouldn't be a lithium yes

1 or no. But I think framing something like this, with
2 the gravity and the weights that we are the decisions,
3 that we as community feel, we must, you know, we are
4 very deeply important. As to what a comment should or
5 shouldn't be could easily be interpreted as taking
6 advantage of an already disadvantaged community.

7 The public comment process is very important.
8 It's set specifically to gauge public and local
9 comprehension, and whether or not the issues are being
10 addressed properly. So, this Commission also addressed
11 translating those comments.

12 What you are hearing as a lithium yes or no
13 comment, I'm hearing as a yes we are comprehending what
14 the considerations are, and the changes coming -- or no,
15 we are not comprehending or understanding these two
16 processes and the changes coming. And I think it's very
17 important to be able to read the draft and understand
18 it, and see and be able to research and see if all the
19 issues at the legislative, that's the Democrat society,
20 we are the public arm to make sure these very nine
21 important topics are correctly addressed properly, and
22 unbiasedly covered.

23 And so, it's very important, especially as the
24 Chair said, this has my name on it. And that's very
25 important. As scholars, like we don't want to leave

1 those stones unturned. So, let's extend this and do it
2 right. Thank you so much.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

4 MS. LOZA: The next commentor is Orlando
5 Foote, then it will be Maria Loera. Orlando, you should
6 be able to unmute yourself.

7 MR. FOOTE: Can you hear me now?

8 MS. LOZA: Yes.

9 MR. FOOTE: Yes. Orlando Foote, I'm an
10 attorney in El Centro. I've been in the county for half
11 a century involved in a variety of endeavors, including
12 but not limited to geothermal and now the geothermal
13 activities.

14 I'm frustrated by the potential, even though
15 it may be otherwise logically justified, of having a
16 further extension on the time prescribed for the
17 development of the report. You can report this thing to
18 death, and others will catch up and pass us. That
19 worries me significantly.

20 In addition, it seems as though the
21 Commission, or at least one or more members of the
22 Commission, are seeking enough acceptance of report
23 recommendations that you might just as well have a
24 plebiscite and have everybody vote on it. Those are
25 negative concerns.

1 I certainly encourage the extension of time
2 which is sufficient to derive satisfactory public input,
3 but you can't go on forever. You just can't. Please
4 let's get this done, get something concrete before you.

5 Finally, I certainly subscribe to what Tim
6 Kelley said with regard to the development of
7 industries, and also with what Rod Colwell said in
8 connection with the necessity for reaching a conclusion.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

11 MS. LOZA: Okay, last hand raised is from
12 Maria Loera. You should be able to be yourself.

13 MS. LOERA: Hello, this is Maria Loera with
14 Leadership Council. And I want to start by saying that
15 the extension of this report deadline and the inclusion
16 of an accessible public comment process is a good step
17 forward, that I hope is well taken advantage of given
18 that it was clear during the last meeting on July 21st,
19 that local residents, as well as local tribe members,
20 continue to feel uninformed and not properly engaged or
21 consulted, and therefore continue to have concerns and
22 questions of what this means to the future of their
23 communities.

24 So, in order to move forward with the promise
25 of lithium for the future of clean energy in a correct

1 manner that prevents further harm, this needs to be
2 addressed and I hope this opportunity is again, taken
3 well advantage of. Also, as stated earlier in the other
4 comments it is not clear how and by the whom the report
5 is being developed, or how and to what extent it will be
6 considered in future decision making. It should be
7 clearly stated how and by whom the report is being
8 developed, how it will be considered in future
9 legislation.

10 Most importantly, it is unclear how local
11 comments and feedback will be incorporated into the
12 report, given the continued lack of accessible and
13 proper community engagement, and information sharing as
14 described again in the previous meeting. As one of our
15 main objectives of this Commission, we expect to see a
16 report that comprehensively addresses the concerns of
17 the community, their demands, and their recommendations
18 for development of community benefits, strong policy
19 programs, and investment recommendations to ensure
20 further environmental harm doesn't happen, while
21 expanding geothermal and lithium extraction development.
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you.

24 MS. LOZA: I don't see any more comments at
25 this time. Back to you, Chair Paz.

1 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. So, I'll return to my
2 colleagues here to see if we have a motion or further
3 discussion. I believe Commissioner Olmedo had said he
4 had something else, or maybe you can open this back up.

5 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Just for clarification,
6 Madam Chair, if we haven't put a motion right? There's
7 no motion yet at the table.

8 CHAIR PAZ: There's no motion at the table.
9 What is at the table is a consideration for a deadline
10 of December 1st, with public process consultation with
11 communities and tribes.

12 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Is this report
13 (INDISCERNIBLE) significant (INDISCERNIBLE)

14 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Sorry to interrupt,
15 can't hear Louis at all. Can't hear.

16 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: -- it is the reality
17 that (INDISCERNIBLE)

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The audio is really
19 cutting out.

20 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: We can't hear.

21 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: (INDISCERNIBLE)
22 (JUMBLED AUDIO)

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Terribly garbled.

24 CHAIR PAZ: Let's try it again.

25 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Mic check? Can you hear

1 me?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think it's the -

3 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Is that working? We're
4 good? Okay.

5 Okay so, here's my equity pitch, or motion.

6 But before I provide the notion, I think it's only fair.
7 I think we've had enough history, enough knowledge to
8 know that this community needs time to be able to review
9 the report, to be able to gather and convince experts in
10 subject matter on many different areas that this report
11 will cover in order for the public and the community to
12 say that disadvantaged community, very well documented,
13 that needs to find that support.

14 This is not a community that I assume that the
15 disadvantaged community will write a check and get
16 themselves a CEQA attorney, hydrologists, geologists,
17 industry experts to be able to help them. Buying the
18 type of public comment on many different areas. So that
19 the (INDISCERNIBLE) and all stakeholders are
20 (INDISCERNIBLE) a part of this, are well represented.
21 So, for that, I would say that (INDISCERNIBLE) date for
22 comment period is what would make sense. But in the
23 spirit of compromise, which is not a word I commonly
24 use, I would like to put a motion forward that we
25 provide a 30-day public comment period. That's it.

1 CHAIR PAZ: And Deanna, I think you were
2 looking at the calendar. So, with a December 1st
3 deadline, what does the public comment period look like?
4 How many days?

5 MS. CARRILLO: Looking at the calendar, my
6 suggestion for consideration, not a recommendation just
7 an option to consider, would be to the English version
8 posted and public on September 1st, for a 36-day public
9 comment period. The Spanish version, being posted on
10 September 15th, these are all target dates, for a 22-day
11 public comment period.

12 A community meeting -- meetings, week of
13 October 3rd, with the public comment period closing on
14 October 7th. There would be a September Lithium Valley
15 Commission meeting to talk about the report as
16 Commissioners. An October Lithium Valley Commission
17 meeting to discuss public comment, and then a November
18 public comment period or Commission meeting to talk
19 about the final report.

20 Under this scenario, the public comment period
21 on the final report would be incorporated in that final
22 public meeting. So it would be that, maybe a 10-day,
23 and the agenda and the final report would be posted at
24 the same time for another public comment period.

25 No air quotes, sorry.

1 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Madam Chair, during the
2 calendar I like to revise my motion to instead -- I'd
3 like to put a motion forward for a 30-day public comment
4 period for the English and the Spanish versions of the
5 report.

6 MS. CARRILLO: So, what that will likely mean
7 is that the English version will be a little longer just
8 so that we can get a draft report out. And then the
9 Spanish version -- (off mic interruption)
10 -- yeah.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

12 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: So just -- so I think
13 what I'm hearing is that the English version will come
14 out first, it'll get 30 days. When the Spanish version
15 comes out, it will get 30 days. That's what I'm
16 thinking I'm hearing, because you want the equity in
17 terms of 30-day, 30-day, not a longer period for the
18 English version. Is that what -- I mean I just want to
19 clarify, is that what you're --

20 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Yes, Commissioner.

21 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: Okay.

22 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: That's what I'm - ideally
23 would be that they both come out together. But, I
24 definitely feel that the equitable component of it is
25 that they both get 30 days.

1 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: So that is an option.

2 Another option, but it changes the timeline a little
3 bit. Is that -- would we wait until the Spanish
4 translation is completed, and then both go out at the
5 same time.

6 I'm just putting that out there. I mean, I'm
7 not recommending, I'm just saying as we're talking it
8 through. When you look at maybe sort of that
9 awkwardness, that here's an English version, it's out
10 for 30 days, then a staggered 30 day for Spanish. So it
11 is a little awkward. It seems as if they both run at
12 the same time.

13 CHAIR PAZ: Yeah. And, I mean in another
14 perspective to the equity conversation is that the
15 tribal consultation is going to need the time to review.
16 So, perhaps it doesn't hurt for the purpose of stating
17 to engage the tribes, because they want to receive it,
18 review it, and then I know based on our previous
19 consultation with the last meeting was like, they've
20 worked very well involving other tribes, and all that
21 takes time.

22 So, for that reason only, I would say it's 36
23 days for the English, that's fine it's six days give or
24 take, but it allows our tribes a little more time to
25 gather together around the report and do, you know, go

1 through the process that they go through. And then
2 having 30 days for the Spanish. Understanding that it's
3 just hard to get them out at the same time because you
4 need the English before you can translate it.

5 But if that's okay with the rest of you, just,
6 again, it's just a different equity lens given the needs
7 of our tribal neighbors.

8 MS. CARRILLO: Chair Paz, could I refrain a
9 little bit?

10 CHAIR PAZ: Go ahead.

11 MS. CARRILLO: I think what I've heard was a
12 suggestion, was to get the English version out as soon
13 as possible, and to ensure that the Spanish version has
14 at least 30 days, and to align the end of that public
15 comment period together, which would enable additional
16 tribal deliberation.

17 CHAIR PAZ: Would that work for Commissioner
18 Olmedo?

19 COMMISSIONER OLMEDO: Yes. (INDISCERNIBLE) So
20 my motion is that we have a minimum of 30 days for both
21 the English and Spanish version of the reports. Would
22 that suffice?

23 CHAIR PAZ: I think the minimum suffices and
24 we'll try to get out, you know, start the tribal
25 engagement with plenty of time as we can so that they

1 can deliberate. Thank you for that.

2 So, there is a motion, and I think this would
3 still put us at the December deadline that we talked
4 about. It's just more clarity on the days. But if the
5 -- is there a second?

6 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: I'll second that.

7 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. And who was that?

8 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: That was me, Manfred
9 Scott.

10 CHAIR PAZ: Oh, thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Can we delete the
12 minimum of 30 days?

13 CHAIR PAZ: We -

14 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Um -

15 (INDISCERNIBLE/OFF MIC)

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The second on the
17 motion was Commissioner Manfred Scott.

18 CHAIR PAZ: And I think then the discussion
19 was coming from Commissioner Weisgall asking if we can
20 delete the minimum and I don't know what that does to
21 our timeline or our intent here. So, I need a little --

22 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Yeah, so just call it
23 30 days.

24 CHAIR PAZ: Oh. I think if we just call it 30
25 days then we might not be able to release it sooner to

1 the -- in English for the tribes to have that extra
2 time. So that might be why we need minimum in there.

3 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Got it, thank you.

4 CHAIR PAZ: Okay, thank you.

5 So, there is a motion and there is a second.

6 We did the public comment. So, roll call please.

7 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Castaneda?

8 COMMISSIONER CASTANEDA: Yes.

9 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Colwell?

10 COMMISSIONER COLWELL: Yes.

11 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Dolega?

12 COMMISSIONER DOLEGA: Yes.

13 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Flores?

14 Commissioner Flores?

15 Commissioner Hanks?

16 COMMISSIONER HANKS: No.

17 MS. LOZA: Vice Chair Kelley?

18 VICE CHAIR KELLEY: Yes.

19 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Lopez?

20 Commissioner Lopez?

21 Commissioner Olmedo?

22 COMMISSIONER OLMEDN: Yes.

23 MS. LOZA: Chair Paz?

24 CHAIR PAZ: Yes.

25 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Reynolds?

1 Commissioner Ruiz?

2 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes.

3 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Scott?

4 COMMISSIONER SCOTT: Yes.

5 MS. LOZA: Commissioner Soto?

6 Commissioner Soto?

7 Commissioner Weisgall?

8 COMMISSIONER WEISGALL: Yes.

9 MS. LOZA: Okay, we have one yeses and one no.

10 CHAIR PAZ: How may yes?

11 MS. LOZA: Nine.

12 CHAIR PAZ: Nine. Okay, so the motion carries
13 and there is a question from Mr. Hanks.

14 COMMISSIONER HANKS: Will we meet the
15 deadlines that we were tasked with by the CEC?

16 CHAIR PAZ: What deadline are you talking
17 about? The report deadline of October 1st?

18 COMMISSIONER HANKS: Yes.

19 CHAIR PAZ: There will be a draft in
20 circulation, there will not be a final report until
21 December the first.

22 COMMISSIONER HANKS: So that means no. Do we
23 have authority to do that?

24 CHAIR PAZ: We do not need to seek authority.

25 The report is just going to be late, but we will be --

1 and I have been in conversations with Assemblymember
2 Garcia, letting him know where we were, what the
3 conversation was going to be here, and what we were
4 going to be considering. So, I think there is some due
5 diligence and just out of respect from us to the
6 legislature and the Governor's Office, just to
7 communicate where we are. And those steps either have
8 started, or will happen.

9 COMMISSIONER HANKS: Okay, just wanted to be
10 clear, we're not meeting our deadline that we were
11 tasked with. We were tasked with certain missions. I
12 think most of those are completed. The first ten days,
13 and the first ten meetings and the second ten meetings
14 have been mostly (INDISCERNIBLE) the
15 task(INDISCERNIBLE).

16 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you for your comment.
17 Commissioner Hanks was asking for clarification whether
18 the vote that we just took meets the deadline that the
19 was given to us. And the answer was that no, we will
20 not be having a final report by October 1st. It was
21 also clarified that we do not need to seek permission or
22 a formal extension to change our timeline for when the
23 report is going to be completed.

24 However, that there has been conversations
25 both with the author of the legislation, Assemblymember

1 Garcia, just to let him know. Obviously, we didn't know
2 where we were going, but I did let him know about the
3 conversation that was going to be happening today. And
4 it's important that we keep him as the author informed
5 and as well conversations that the CEC has either
6 started or will have with the governor's office and
7 others who have been following our conversations. So
8 that was the discussion that just happened in summary.
9 The vote received nine yes and one nay, and the motion
10 passes and our -- we are going to be working on a
11 December 1st deadline to submit the final report to the
12 legislature.

13 Thank you, everyone for this. And I believe
14 we can go -- I don't know. I don't know if we're gonna
15 have enough time to cover item -- that the item that we
16 skipped, status of the Energy Commission rulemaking. So
17 maybe my recommendation is that we do this next time,
18 and then we hear Commissioner updates and then general
19 public comment and we wrap up the meeting.

20 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: Chair Paz, if I may.
21 If instead of hearing the item right now, if that's the
22 pleasure of the Commission, if we could still have
23 Energy Commission attorney Renee Webster-Hawkins at
24 least make an announcement about a hearing next week
25 with respect to one of those rulemaking proceedings. I

1 think that might be beneficial to at least get that on
2 the record.

3 CHAIR PAZ: Sounds good. So, we'll have a
4 mini version of this -- an abbreviated comment on this
5 topic.

6 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: Super brief
7 announcement, yes.

8 CHAIR PAZ: Okay.

9 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: No presentation just,
10 announcement.

11 CHAIR PAZ: Okay. Thank you for that,
12 Kourtney.

13 So, Renee?

14 MS. WEBSTER-HAWKINS: Absolutely. Thank you,
15 Chair Paz. I'll do a public service announcement
16 version of the presentation. And this is just to remind
17 the Commissioners and the public that we did describe
18 two rulemakings that the Energy Commission was embarking
19 on, and we provided that presentation back in December.
20 And as of today, one of the rulemakings, which involves
21 streamlining our procedures around the county's legal
22 ability to petition for delegated authority -- that
23 rulemaking was concluded. And those rulemaking, those
24 new regulations are effective as of July 13th.

25 The other rulemaking, which regards what we

1 call our small powerplant exemption process, that is
2 still open. And what the SPPE process does, is it
3 allows developers to apply to the Commission, if they
4 are proposing a powerplant in between 50 and 100
5 megawatts, they can apply to the Energy Commission for
6 an exemption from our permitting process, and instead go
7 to local government for their permits as long as there's
8 no significant impacts to the environment.

9 And, as I mentioned, that rulemaking is still
10 open and we are having a public hearing on that
11 rulemaking on Tuesday, August 30th, next Tuesday, and
12 it's accessible to everyone via Zoom. The calendar
13 event and Zoom access instructions are on the Energy
14 Commission's front page on our calendar, and we invite
15 anyone who has any interest in that rulemaking to join
16 us then.

17 CHAIR PAZ: Quick point of clarification,
18 Renee.

19 MS. WEBSTER-HAWKINS: Yes.

20 CHAIR PAZ: On the first rulemaking that you
21 summarized for us and that is completed, it allows the
22 counties to permit up to how many megawatts?

23 MS. WEBSTER-HAWKINS: So, the geothermal
24 delegation authority is something that the counties have
25 the ability to petition us for. And that -- the ability

1 to petition us in in law. So that's not changing.

2 And it allows them to petition the Energy
3 Commission for permitting authority for any geothermal
4 powerplant of any size. So, there's no maximum limit.
5 The only thing that the rulemaking does, is it changes
6 our administrative process for considering those
7 petitions. But we're not changing anything about the
8 county's ability to request that authority from the
9 Energy Commission.

10 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: And if I can make a
11 point of clarification -

12 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you for that.

13 COMMISSIONER VACCARO: Right now, the county
14 does have its own authority to permit geothermal power
15 plants up to 49.9999 -- under 50 megawatts of generating
16 capacity. As soon as you get to 50 megawatts of
17 generating capacity or more for geothermal power plants,
18 that's the exclusive jurisdiction of the Energy
19 Commission. I just wanted to make that distinction.
20 It's not of any size, it's -- they already have it for
21 under 50 megawatts.

22 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Any questions from my
23 colleagues here on the Commission? I don't see any
24 questions here in Calipatria. Any questions from
25 Commissioners joining us via Zoom?

1 Okay. I don't see any.

2 Public comment? Since we did abbreviate this
3 topic? So, I will open the floor here in Calipatria to
4 comment on the rulings that Renee summarized for us.

5 So, anyone here in Calipatria wishing to make
6 a public comment is welcome to the podium.

7 I do not see any. Is there any public comment
8 on Zoom?

9 MS. LOZA: Just a reminder if you're joining
10 us on Zoom on the computer, please use the raise-hand
11 feature. If you've called in, please dial star-nine to
12 raise your hand, and star-six to unmute your phoneline.
13 The first hand raised is Lorenzo Tahbo, you should be
14 able to unmute yourself.

15 Hi Lorenzo, you should be able to unmute
16 yourself.

17 Hi Lorenzo, I see that your mic is unmuted but
18 I can't hear you. So, if you want to write your comment
19 in the Q&A?

20 I could read that for you. But I don't see
21 any other hands raised.

22 CHAIR PAZ: Okay. Well, thank you for that.
23 And then there's still an opportunity for general public
24 comment, so if the speaker missed this opportunity, we
25 can hear from them during that section.

1 We are now going into commissioner updates or
2 comments. So, are there any comments, updates from the
3 Commissioners?

4 Vice Chair Ryan Kelley?

5 VICE CHAIR RYAN KELLEY: So, the County of
6 Imperial has awarded contractor for the Specific Plan
7 Programmatic EIR. It is Dudek. Our kickoff meeting is
8 next Wednesday. We will have more engagement, but we
9 will be talking about scope.

10 We are also trying to specialize with a new
11 element on manufacturing element. So that value of the
12 (INDISCERNIBLE) for the geothermal would be of interest
13 to you. And, also, that we are continuing to work
14 towards trying to entice and incentivize manufacturing
15 to locate in Imperial County, to have a value added
16 here. So, I just wanted to share those changes. And
17 also, to thank that we have already received the funding
18 and an RFP is being developed for the community
19 engagement of the PEIR, and that should be released in
20 September.

21 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you for those updates, Vice
22 Chair Kelley. Anybody else has comments, updates?

23 I don't see any here in Calipatria. Anyone
24 joining us via Zoom, any Commissioners with comments?

25 I don't see any hands raised. I will use my

1 comments only to thank the CEC. Kourtney, Deanna,
2 Silvia for being here with us in person, and for all the
3 behind the works -- behind the scenes work that you do
4 and how you support us. And also, Comite Civico's team
5 who is helping us always with the technology. And the
6 state, and the Calipatria for hosting us here. So,
7 thank you everyone.

8 And with that, we will open it to general
9 public comment for members of the audience to give us
10 general public comment, and if you are here in
11 Calipatria, you are welcome to walk over to the podium.
12 If you cannot walk over to the podium you can raise your
13 hand and a microphone will be walked over to you.

14 MR. FLORES: Good afternoon. Once again, Jose
15 Flores. Just a concern is the issues with the feds last
16 week, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The allocation
17 reduction to Nevada, Arizona, and Mexico. Just looking
18 to possible future issues in California with obviously
19 the Colorado River. And, just hoping that we get
20 transparency with the water issues as far as how much
21 water would be used in these possible ventures.

22 And not only the water that's being used, the
23 quantities, but also how they might be paid. Just to
24 have the transparency that Imperial County residents,
25 we're not subsidizing by our rates being increased. So

1 just transparency on future usage of water and the rates
2 of how they might be paid by these companies. Thank
3 you.

4 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Anybody else here in
5 Calipatria?

6 MR. REYES: Hello everyone. My name is Manuel
7 Reyes. I am -- I represent the San Diego and Imperial
8 County Labor Council. I'm also a resident of the
9 Imperial Valley. We're here to support the creation of
10 new unionized well-paid jobs that the lithium extraction
11 will bring to the people, and the families in the
12 community of Imperial Valley. Okay, thank you.

13 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Other comments here in
14 Calipatria?

15 MR. KELLEY: Yeah, Tim Kelley, Imperial Valley
16 Economic Development Corporation. I just wanted to let
17 you know that we held an economic summit focused on the
18 Lithium Valley in June. We had a limited amount of
19 people that could attend. We had a -- which was 150, we
20 had over 250 people show up. And they showed up in
21 support of this industry, wanted to learn about what the
22 opportunities are for our region, for the Imperial
23 County as far as work force goes, housing, et cetera.
24 It's something that really could change our economy, and
25 that's what the interest that was shown by our

1 community. I want to make sure that those that are
2 listening know that the community does support this
3 effort. And would like to see it move forward, and not
4 be hindered by some of the delays.

5 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. Any other members of
6 the public wishing to give comments?

7 Thank you. Commissioner Hanks, do you want to
8 give your comment?

9 COMMISSIONER HANKS: No, I just wanted to add
10 to Mr. Kelley's comment of when you had the lithium
11 summit. It was on the same day when we had this meeting
12 scheduled. We needed to coordinate a little better
13 somewhere along the way. Thank you.

14 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you. We will now take
15 general public comments from members of the public that
16 are joining us via Zoom. Erica?

17 MS. LOZA: If you are joining us by Zoom on
18 the computer, please use the raise-hand feature. If you
19 have called in, please dial star-nine to raise your
20 hand, or star-six to unmute your phoneline.

21 In the meantime, I will read comments from the
22 question and answer box.

23 So, the first one's from Carmen Lucas and it
24 says, "Public Comment to be read: Indian Tribes were not
25 on the directly affected communities list. Why not?"

1 Who wrote the legislation? And why weren't the tribes
2 included?"

3 The next comment is by Lorenzo Tahbo and it
4 says, "When does the comment period start? From the
5 date on the letter or when it's received?"

6 I don't see any hands raised, so back to you,
7 Chair Paz.

8 CHAIR PAZ: Thank you, this concludes the
9 general public comment section.

10 And we are at the end of our meeting, 5:03, we
11 will see you next time.

12 Thank you, everyone.

13 (Whereupon the meeting was adjourned at 4:03
14 P.M.)

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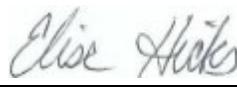
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I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were reported by me, a certified electronic court reporter and a disinterested person, and was under my supervision thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

And I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 23rd day of September, 2022.



ELISE HICKS, IAPRT

CERT**2176

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I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript, to the best of my ability, from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.



September 23, 2022

MARTHA L. NELSON, CERT**367