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LSA submittal re RFI for Clean Energy Resources for Reliability

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



Large-scale Solar Association Proposal to inform SB 846 and AB 205 implementation: Accelerating Renewable Energy Development

In spite of progressive clean energy targets adopted over the last decade and more, California’s increase in clean energy deployment has been hampered by confusing market signals, deficiencies in planning infrastructures, and a lack of permitting resources. It is also taking place against the backdrop of severe heat events, transmission-threatening wildfires, and hydro-sapping water scarcity. This confluence of stressors is straining an electricity market working to divest itself of fossil generation – all leading to potentially serious near- and mid-term reliability challenges. As a result, the state has been forced to explore significant ‘keep the lights on’ stop-gap reliability measures. To balance this, the funding proposal outlined here can provide sound investments in the state’s permitting and planning infrastructure that would strengthen California’s renewable energy development capabilities today and into the long-term planning horizon – and ultimately will help build the institutional frameworks that support a transformed grid.

Permit and Siting Support

1. State - County Partnership and Support

- a. Counties bear a disproportionately high role in delivering on state decarbonization targets in relation to their influence in setting those targets; and yet, the counties are largely on their own when it comes to siting wind, solar and storage projects. Counties’ permitting infrastructure and resources are largely insufficient to address the significant increase in projects projected to meet state clean energy targets. In the next 12 years, to meet the requirements of SB 1020 (Laird) and to meet the needs of an increasingly decarbonizing grid, California must add extraordinary amounts of clean energy and storage to the grid. Most recent estimates show a need for 86GW of new resources by 2035.

This next phase in renewable energy development, which will play out over ever more sensitive landscapes and involve more engaged constituencies, necessitates increased state partnership with and support for our County partners – especially in light of recent county staffing shortages in the wake of the pandemic. LSA believes that county financial assistance will help to bolster support for and, where appropriate, work on permitting the projects upon which California depends to decarbonize its electricity grid.

Details for this local assistance grant program include:

- i. **Appropriation: \$360M one-time allocation to establish a county grant program at the CEC.**
- ii. **Administrator: CEC**
- iii. **Applicants: County Local Governments**
- iv. **Scope:**
 1. For every 100MW of solar, solar+storage, and wind energy approved by a county or the CEC, and any geothermal sited by the CEC, the host county would receive \$1M, not to exceed \$5M for any single project.



- a. The smallest MW project allowable for a grant would be 20MW/\$200,000.
 2. For siting standalone battery storage >50MW, the county could receive flat fee/award \$20,000.
 3. The recipient county shall earmark no less than 25% of the grant award to the local community in which the project is based.
 4. The grant award would be paid to the county once all county approvals for the project are granted
- v. Eligible projects: any solar, solar+storage, storage, terrestrial wind, or geothermal project above 20MW