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*Comment Received From: Susannah Saunders*

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## **Phase 1 for funding plan fails to what is needed to meet climate crisis**

RE: Inflation Reduction Act Residential Energy Rebate Programs

I respectfully submit these comments to the California Energy Commission (CEC) phase 1 plan to disperse funding provided by the Department of Energy (DOE) from the Inflation Reduction act.

As a member of the Indivisible movement since 2016, a participant alongside the strong and highly committed Marin County climate advocates, and as a commissioner of the San Anselmo Climate Action Commission, I find the Phase 1 failure to release the full funding provided by the DOE to be an injustice to the state of California.

I completely support the commitment to equitably release this funding to enable every income level to electrify. The majority of funding should go to low to moderate income and I applaud the CEC in its decision to distribute the funds within their stated structure that follows the guidance in the legislation. We must make sure all are included in the transition to building decarbonization and no one is left behind.

I do object to the incremental release of funding and the failure to allow all Californians to fully electrify. I believe you are in violation of the language built into this carefully written legislation passed into law. It provided a series of rebates to enable people to electrify their homes and Phase 1 of California's funding does not allow for those in 80-150% of their regions median income level as written into the law.

Phase 1 provides funding for those in that 80-150% bracket only for a heat pump and that does not allow a resident to fully reduce the emissions caused by methane. It will mean continued exposure to Noxious Oxide and Benzene, a known cause of Leukemia, especially where families will be cooking and gathering together for dinner at the kitchen table or children will be doing their homework. Recent studies have shown it is not enough to turn on the ventilation hood over a gas cooktop or oven to make the air safe to breathe after cooking with gas. It requires the opening of all windows and doors to defuse the hazardous chemicals in the air.

I expected to see graduated rebate amounts based on income levels. I did not foresee a blanket ban on any other form of help for those seeking to do whole home electrification. Furthermore, most homeowners will need to upgrade their electrical panel to install the heat pump and it appears there will be no rebate for that in phase 1. The superior efficiency of a heat pump is lost if a home is not properly insulated, ducts sealed, and other measures taken to enclose a building so the energy isn't wasted because it goes outside rather than stay inside. None of those measures will have the

funds provided by the Inflation Reduction Act.

Natural gas is 90% methane and over the first 20 years after it's released into the atmosphere, methane is 80 to 86 times more potent than carbon dioxide in terms of warming the climate. We need to decrease the use of methane as quickly as possible. We have no time to waste and by distributing only eighty million dollars of the two hundred and ninety million dollars provided by the DOE is a grave injustice. It will slow our ability to address a climate crisis that is enacting a terrible toll on California.

We have just been subjected to a prolonged extreme heat event and our wildfire season has gotten off to an early start. Our recent atmospheric river events have wreaked havoc and along with the wildfires have increased home insurance rates if people are able to get insurance at all. Slow walking and inhibiting the decrease of methane released by natural gas use in homes and multifamily housing is malpractice.

Nor do we have time for a long drawn out process in which there is another two month wait as you rewrite this phase 1 plan or come up with a phase 2 plan. This is a climate emergency. People are dying during these extreme weather events and wildfires. I call on the CEC to release all funding so California can electrify as quickly as possible. Again, we have no time to waste. The passing of the Inflation Reduction Act is a miracle and the CEC needs to follow the intent of the law which is to allow residents a series of rebates needed to electrify.

The CEC should not pick and choose which parts of the law it will implement. It must follow the spirit of the law by releasing all funds, allowing residents to receive the rebates they need to electrify, and making sure all Californians can participate in an equitable transition to electrification.