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*Comment Received From: Arcadia Unified School District
Submitted On: 9/19/2024
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Reopen CalSHAPE Ventilation Program Applications & Give Schools Access to Available Funds

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

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September 17, 2024

California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Reopen CalSHAPE Ventilation Program Applications & Give Schools Access to Available Funds

Dear Commissioners of the California Energy Commission,

We urge the California Energy Commission (CEC) to reopen the CalSHAPE Ventilation Program and give Schools access to already available funds to replace failing equipment and improve air quality for the safety of our students, staff, and communities. Our school district has been ready and waiting many months to apply for the Upgrades & Repair (U&R) grants but have been unable due to slow reviewing processing by the CEC, multiple changes to the program deadlines, and the most recent failed legislative attempt to sunset CalSHAPE.

We ask the CEC to:

- Reopen U&R applications and set a new application deadline for March 31, 2025
- Expedite assessment data reviews & U&R application processing timelines
- Provide reasonable grant application execution timelines for local education agencies (LEA)
- Extend all CalSHAPE program expenditure deadlines to September 30, 2026

The recent failure of Assembly Bill 3121, proposed to deny Schools of air quality funding and sunset the CalSHAPE program, now makes it imperative that the CEC honor the intent and carry out the obligations of the CalSHAPE program to its fullest extent. The requested program changes would ensure many more Schools have access to available funds, time to process grant documents, and multiple summer breaks for timely construction delivery.

The CalSHAPE program was designed to improve air quality in schools, benefiting children's health, particularly in underserved communities. The recent program delays, abrupt deadline changes, lack of transparency, and legislative attempts to "raid the CalSHAPE piggy bank" have undermined the program's primary goal of ensuring a safe and healthy learning environment for all students. This has also caused harm to Schools, local businesses, and communities who have committed significant resources to this initiative.

We urge the CEC to take immediate action to reopen the CalSHAPE Ventilation Program U&R applications and expedite processing to give many Schools access to these air quality & safety funds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dierk Esseln".

Dierk Esseln
Assistant Superintendent, Business Services