



MERCED IRRIGATION DISTRICT

January 4, 2013

California Energy Commission

DOCKETED
12-GREP-1

TN # 69034

JAN. 04 2013

RE: Renewable Energy Planning Grants – Docket number 12-GREP-1

In determining eligibility for grant funding for renewable energy planning, Merced Irrigation District would like to respectfully request that specific priority consideration be given to communities that face the most significant economic hardship. Merced Irrigation District, located in Merced County in the San Joaquin Valley, is committed to helping meet the state's goal of 33 percent renewable energy by 2020.

However, doing so will cause additional hardship to our community. The region has a large minority population, high unemployment and has remained within the top 10 communities for foreclosures in the nation. The effects of the economic downturn continue to linger in Merced County.

Merced ID would like to respectfully request that priority consideration in awarding of all renewable energy grants – including for planning – be given to communities in the most need of assistance based on one or more of the following criteria:

1. Unemployment rates significantly above the national and state averages. This can be further defined as communities experiencing unemployment rates that remain within the top 10 across the nation for 24 consecutive months between August 2008 and August 2010.
2. Housing foreclosure rates significantly above the national and state averages. This can be further defined as those communities experiencing foreclosure rates that remain within the top 10 across the nation for 24 consecutive months between August 2008 and August 2010.
3. The cost of procuring renewable energy would result in residential or commercial utility bill increases greater than 10 percent within the region facing economic hardship.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Sweigard", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

John Sweigard
General Manager
Merced Irrigation District