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PRESS RELEASE

Docket #: R.14-11-001

**CPUC TAKES ADDITIONAL STEPS TO INCREASE
PUBLIC ACCESS TO UTILITY RECORDS**

SAN FRANCISCO, August 18, 2016 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today took steps to increase transparency and improve access by the public to utility records by creating a consistent process for utilities to follow when submitting documents marked as confidential.

Beginning immediately, all potentially confidential documents submitted to the CPUC must specify the basis upon which confidentiality is claimed. The request for confidentiality must be accompanied by a declaration signed by an officer of the requesting entity or by an employee or agent designated by an officer. Further, if only certain information in a document (e.g., customer names and addresses, contract payment amounts, etc.) is confidential, only that information rather than the entire document should be designated as confidential.

This new process will help ensure consistency across industries and expedite CPUC review of requests for confidential treatment in response to California Public Records Act requests. In addition, today's decision provides guidance for the development of the process that the CPUC will use in determining whether a potentially confidential document can be disclosed, with the goal of consistent treatment and prompt disclosure of non-confidential documents.

The CPUC opened this proceeding to improve public access to records furnished to the CPUC by regulated entities, while ensuring that information truly deserving of confidential status retains that protection. Public Utilities Code Section 583 sets a process for dealing with claims of confidentiality, but does not contain any substantive rules on what is and is not appropriate for protection.

Said CPUC President Michael Picker, the Commissioner assigned to the proceeding, “Public Utilities Code Section 583 directly conflicts with the California Public Records Act by requiring that the CPUC hold all materials from public release that regulated entities mark as confidential. No other state or local agency that I know of has this kind of legal double bind - one law that forbids sharing important information that the CPUC collects, and another that requires us to provide that information on demand. Today’s decision puts steps in place to implement an updated and clarified process for submitting potentially confidential documents to the CPUC. We will also try to engage the Legislature to amend their statutory direction, or to at least clarify administratively what steps utilities must take when they file documents or provide materials in advance.”

The CPUC’s proceeding to improve public access to records furnished to the CPUC by regulated entities remains open for further refinement and improvement of the CPUC’s processes.

The proposal voted on is available at:

<http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M166/K085/166085458.PDF>.

For more information about the CPUC, please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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