



# California Public Utilities Commission

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## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **PUC ADOPTS SOLAR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

SAN FRANCISCO, September 20, 2007 - The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) today adopted a plan for allocating \$50 million in grants to research, development, deployment and demonstration (RD&D) projects under the California Solar Initiative program.

The California Solar Initiative's goal is to drive the installation of 3,000 megawatts of high-performing new solar installations in the state over the next 10 years, moving the state toward a cleaner energy future.

In adopting the California Solar Initiative, the PUC allocated up to 5 percent of the program's annual budget to RD&D that explores solar technologies and market development. Today's decision adopts the framework for distributing those funds.

"To help achieve the goals of the California Solar Initiative, moving swiftly to fund high-impact projects that speed up the development of low-cost solar electricity production is of key importance," said PUC President Michael R. Peevey. "In adopting this plan, we make clear we intend to support projects needed to develop solar technologies and that have a reasonable chance of success in improving the economics of solar generation. The plan also protects ratepayers by creating a transparent and fair process for project funding."

"This \$50 million investment will create a bright spot in California's energy future," said Commissioner Timothy Alan Simon. "Its benefits will shine on each of California's million solar roofs."

Under the RD&D plan, funding will be targeted at projects that:

- Improve the economics of solar technologies by reducing technology costs and increasing system performance.
- Focus on issues that directly benefit California, and that may not be funded by others.
- Fill knowledge gaps to enable successful, wide-scale deployment of solar distributed generation technologies.

- Overcome significant barriers to technology adoption.
- Take advantage of California's wealth of data from past, current, and future installations to fulfill the above.
- Provide bridge funding to help promising solar technologies transition from a pre-commercial state to full commercial viability.
- Support efforts to address the integration of distributed solar power into the grid in order to maximize its value to ratepayers.

Project solicitations will occur through multiple funding cycles and a competitive process. The size of the individual grants will be capped to allow funding for a larger portfolio of eligible projects. An independent program evaluator will provide comprehensive evaluation of the program's management and execution every three years.

Today's decision also grants \$10 million of the RD&D funds to support the construction of the Helios research facility, a multi-investor project led by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the University of California at Berkeley, which focuses on developing break-through solutions for low-cost solar electricity generation.

For more information on the PUC, please visit [www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov).

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