

Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Smart Meter Deployment in San Joaquin Valley

State Senator Florez submitted a letter, dated October 7, 2009, to the Commission in which he stated that on Monday, October 5, 2009, he convened a town hall meeting in Kern County to address the numerous complaints he had received from his constituents regarding their Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) bills post Smart Meter installation. Similarly, State Senator Ashburn submitted a letter, dated September 24, 2009, to the Commission voicing similar concerns over the accuracy of the Smart Meters installed by PG&E due to numerous complaints by his constituents. Similar complaints have been made by consumers to both the Commission and PG&E. In response to the various concerns enumerated above and in order to ensure that the consumers have safe, reliable utility service at reasonable rates, and are protected against fraud, I have responded to State Senator Florez with a letter dated October 14, 2009, outlining certain steps the commission will take to address these concerns. The first of these steps and the most urgent is the independent testing of Smart Meters. In order to perform this task, the CPUC's Energy Division needs to contract with third-party technical experts. Timely retention of technical experts is essential to ensure consumers are protected both in going forward with the deployment and in stopping/remediating any technical problems that might be the root of this.

Based on the facts stated above, I request that the commission determine that these facts constitute extraordinary circumstance that justify expedited contracting for consultant services. Pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 632 this finding will permit the Commission to enter into contract(s) without the need to comply with certain provisions of the Government and Public Contract Codes.

Accordingly, I move that the Commission find that the numerous complaints concerning the potential inaccuracy of Smart Meters constitutes an extraordinary circumstance which justifies the use of expedited contracting provided for in Public Utilities Code Section 632.