



**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

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**REPLY COMMENTS OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COALITION
ON THE DRAFT STRATEGIC ENERGY EFFICIENCY PLAN**

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For THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COALITION

August 7, 2008

I. Introduction

In accordance with the Rules of Practice and Procedure of the California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC”), the Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition (“LGSEC”)¹ submits these Reply Comments on the draft *Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan* (“Strategic Plan”) circulated by the CPUC on July 14, 2008.

II. Many Parties Agree That A Different Administrative Approach Is Needed to Achieve Energy and Climate Change Goals

Nearly 25 parties submitted opening comments. Many of them agreed with the Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition that a neutral, third-party entity should be leading the State’s efforts around not only energy efficiency, but the broader issues raised by implementation of the Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act.² While few of these other parties have the focus of the LGSEC on the issues that affect local government, there is broad recognition that the current administrative process will not be sufficient moving forward.

Many of the parties that raise this issue suggest the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance as a possible model. The LGSEC concurs that this is a good starting point.

In the interim period towards developing an independent, neutral, statewide entity to oversee sustainability programs, the CPUC should facilitate the development of independent, regional sustainability offices that have, as part of their mission, the development and delivery of energy efficiency programs. The CPUC could use as a starting point interested, existing local government partnerships that have a regional focus, or the California Center for Sustainable

¹ The Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition includes: the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, the County of Los Angeles, the County of Marin, the City of Santa Monica. Each of these organizations may have different views on elements of these comments, which were approved by the LGSEC’s Board.

² See, in particular, comments from the California League of Food Processors, California Center for Sustainable Energy, City and County of San Francisco, City of San Diego, California Municipal Utilities Association, Division of Ratepayer Advocates, Modesto Irrigation District.

Energy in the San Diego region. The key difference, as stated in our opening comments, is the need for these offices to be independent and address issues that include those raised by the implementation of AB 32, which are broader than the purview of the investor-owned utilities. Ultimately these regional organizations will be needed anyway to work collaboratively with a statewide entity in developing and implementing local programs.

III. Process Must Adapt to Accommodate Smaller Stakeholders

Several parties in addition to LGSEC observed that the process for developing the Strategic Plan and participating at the CPUC is resource and time intensive and disadvantages smaller stakeholders.³ The CPUC must work with other state agencies to develop a process that is more easily accessible to all stakeholders, particularly local governments with limited time, staff, and travel budgets. While ensuring the establishment of regional sustainability offices should help, there still is a significant effort required to ensure that every jurisdiction in California understands the State's energy and environmental goals and has a plan for how that jurisdiction will achieve them. These sustainability offices need to offer programs to schools, transit agencies, and other special districts, in addition to cities, towns, and counties, and may want to include these organizations on their governing boards.

Anticipating how the CPUC will adapt its processes to incorporate the directives coming from the Air Resources Board and other state agencies, the LGSEC is assuming that every current energy efficiency proceeding (and other CPUC proceedings related to the California Solar Initiative, combined heat and power, demand response, resource procurement, and others) will be modified to incorporate goals established by AB32 Scoping Plan. The vast number of proceedings at the CPUC alone speaks to the need for a different method for smaller

³ See, for example, comments of Modesto Irrigation District, California Municipal Utilities Association, Greenlining Institute.

stakeholders to provide input. Staffing even one of these issue areas at the CPUC is the work of at least one, if not more, people for any organization, public or private. Local governments simply do not have the staff or travel budget to do this.

In order to get smaller agencies engaged in this process, as discussed above the CPUC should facilitate the development of independent, regional sustainability offices so these smaller entities can join and leverage combined resources. Even when resources are pooled or regional sustainability offices are formed, it will not be possible to participate in multiple proceedings at multiple agencies. There must be a central, organizing spot where stakeholders can provide input on a range of related issues.

IV. Funding Beyond the Public Goods Charge Is Required

Parties including the utilities⁴ also agreed with LGSEC that utility ratepayers alone will not be able to fund the massive efforts that will be required to meet the State's energy and environmental goals. This again speaks to the need to identify an independent, neutral entity that has a sustainability mandate that includes energy efficiency. The many stakeholders to the energy efficiency world, including the utilities, will support this entity and help it achieve its goals.

V. Evaluation of Rate Design is Important

The LGSEC agrees with the City of San Diego and others⁵ that the CPUC should examine rate design statewide and identify where rate design is unintentionally serving as a deterrent to various energy management strategies, including energy efficiency.

⁴ See, for example, comments of Joint Utilities, California Center for Sustainable Energy.

⁵ See, for example, comments of Ice Energy, National Association of Energy Service Companies, California Attorney General, California Center for Sustainable Energy.

III. CONCLUSION

The final Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan should recognize that a different administrative approach will be required moving forward that addresses the range of issues encompassed in AB 32 implementation, including energy efficiency. As an interim step, the CPUC should facilitate the development of regional sustainability offices. The process moving forward for implementing both energy efficiency and climate policies should be modified to accommodate smaller stakeholders. In particular, the CPUC should work with sister agencies to identify a central, neutral clearinghouse for coordinating these efforts. Funding beyond the public good charge will be required for this work. Finally, the CPUC should examine rate design policies to ensure that rate design is consistent statewide and is not inadvertently deterring customers from pursuing energy efficiency of renewable distributed generation.

Dated: August 7, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

By:



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For THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Jody London, certify that I have, on this date, served a copy of “Reply Comments Of The Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition On Draft Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan” on all known parties to R.08-07-011/A.08-06-004 by transmitting an e-mail message with the document attached to each party named in the official service list, and by serving a hard copy on the Administrative Law Judge.

I declare under penalty of perjury, pursuant to the laws of the State of California, that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated August 7, 2008 in Oakland, California.



Jody London

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