

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PRESIDENT ALICE REYNOLDS, in attendance

COMMISSIONER KAREN DOUGLAS, in attendance

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE CATHLEEN A. FOGEL, presiding

Order Instituting Rulemaking to)	PREHEARING
Establish Policies, Processes, and)	CONFERENCE
Rules to Ensure Safe and Reliable)	
Gas Systems in California and)	Rulemaking
perform Long-Term Gas System)	20-01-007
Planning.)	

REPORTERS' TRANSCRIPT
Virtual Proceeding
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VIRTUAL PROCEEDING

MARCH 19, 2024 - 1:02 P.M.

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ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE FOGEL: Let's go ahead
and go on the record.

Good afternoon. My name again is Cathleen
Fogel. I'm the administrative law judge for Rulemaking
20-01-007, the Rulemaking to Establish Policies,
Processes and Rules to Ensure Safe and Reliable Gas
Systems in California and to Perform Long-Term Gas
Planning.

Today is March 19, 2024. Also assigned to this
case is ALJ David Van Dyken. ALJ Van Dyken and I manage
this proceeding in close consultation with Assigned
Commissioner Karen Douglas, who is also here today.
Commissioner Douglas will be offering some remarks after
I go over the agenda and ground rules and take
appearances.

So just to review the agenda, we're going to
review the service list, take appearances. We'll then
hear from Commissioner Douglas. We'll then go through a
speakers list where I'll allow parties two to three
minutes for each party to speak to, first, the issues
that should be priorities to be in scope for Phase 3.

When you look at the Assigned Commissioner's

1 Ruling from February 22nd, are there issues to add or
2 remove or to combine for consideration in Phase 3?

3 What should the schedule be for Phase 3? How
4 should different tracks be undertaken, concurrently or
5 in a phase manner?

6 And the proceeding categorization and the need
7 for evidentiary hearing during Phase 3. The proceeding
8 is currently categorized as a ratesetting proceeding.
9 Do you agree that it should remain so for Phase 3? Do
10 you believe evidentiary hearings will be needed? If so,
11 what areas of factual disagreement do you see as likely
12 to arise in Phase 3?

13 After going once to the speakers list, I'll
14 allow interested parties a chance to respond to other
15 parties' comments, and then we'll close.

16 We're hoping to complete this PHC in two hours.
17 We're very interested to hear from you today and we've
18 also very carefully reviewed the written comments for
19 those who have filed those, so I do encourage you to be
20 relatively concise.

21 As a reminder, we will not be making any
22 decisions during today's PHC. While in the PHC, we
23 administrative judges will work with Commissioner
24 Douglas and to support her to issue a Phase 3 scoping
25 memo within the next one or two months.

1 As I said before we went on the record, when
2 it's your turn, please speak slowly and clearly. Please
3 state and then spell your name the first time you speak;
4 thereafter, please state your name each time before you
5 speak. This will help us get a complete transcript.

6 In light of that, if necessary, the court
7 reporter or I may interrupt you if there's any inaudible
8 statements or we need you to slow down a little bit. So
9 we'll try and do that in the least disruptive way
10 possible.

11 If you'd like a transcript of today's hearing,
12 you may request one by email by emailing
13 reporting@cpuc.ca.gov.

14 So, again, I'm going to go through the service
15 list and take appearances. As I call your name, please
16 just state your appearance for the record by responding
17 "present." After that, I'll address motions for party
18 status. So I'll start again going through parties
19 alphabetically.

20 Seth Hilton from Air Products and Chemicals
21 Incorporated.

22 MR. HILTON: Present.

23 ALJ FOGEL: Sarah Kozal from CAISO.

24 MS. KOZAL: Present.

25 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you. Rachael Koss with

1 California State Pipe Trades Council, as well as the
2 Western States Council of Sheet Metal Workers, and
3 California Utility Employees.

4 MS. KOSS: Present.

5 ALJ FOGEL: Deborah Behles from California
6 Environmental Justice Alliance.

7 MS. BEHLES: Present.

8 ALJ FOGEL: Ron Liebert, California
9 Manufacturers & Technology Association.

10 MR. LIEBERT: Present.

11 ALJ FOGEL: Gene Nelson, Californians for Green
12 Nuclear Power.

13 MR. NELSON: Present.

14 ALJ FOGEL: Joe Karp with Calpine Corporation
15 and Sacramento Municipal Utility District.

16 MR. KARP: Present.

17 ALJ FOGEL: Lisa Cottle from Central Valley Gas
18 Storage.

19 MS. COTTLE: Present.

20 ALJ FOGEL: Melissa Kasnitz, Center for
21 Accessible Technology.

22 MS. KASNITZ: Present.

23 ALJ FOGEL: Beth Kelly, Environmental Defense
24 Fund.

25 MS. KELLY: Present.

1 ALJ FOGEL: Nora Sheriff, Indicated Shippers.

2 MS. SHERIFF: Present.

3 ALJ FOGEL: Kiki Velez, Natural Resources
4 Defense Council.

5 MS. VELEZ: Present.

6 ALJ FOGEL: Jonathan Pendleton, PG&E.

7 MR. PENDLETON: Present.

8 ALJ FOGEL: Marion Peleo, Public Advocates
9 Office.

10 MS. PELEO: Present.

11 ALJ FOGEL: Jonathan Newlander, San Diego Gas &
12 Electric Company.

13 MR. NEWLANDER: Present.

14 ALJ FOGEL: Jennifer Weberski, Small Business
15 Utility Advocates.

16 MS. WEBERSKI: Present.

17 ALJ FOGEL: Lilly McKenna, Shell Energy
18 Solutions.

19 MS. MCKENNA: Present.

20 ALJ FOGEL: Matt Vespa, Sierra Club.

21 MR. VESPA: Present.

22 ALJ FOGEL: Rebecca Meiers-De Pastino, Southern
23 California Edison Company.

24 MS. MEIERS-DePASTINO: Present.

25 ALJ FOGEL: Edward Hsu, Southern California Gas

1 Company.

2 MR. HSU: Present.

3 ALJ FOGEL: Norman Pedersen, Southern
4 California Generation Coalition.

5 MR. PEDERSEN: (Line muted.)

6 ALJ FOGEL: Okay. Norman Pedersen does not
7 appear to be here.

8 (Crosstalk.)

9 ALJ FOGEL: Okay. Mr. Pedersen, are you here?

10 MR. PEDERSEN: Yes.

11 ALJ FOGEL: All righty. Vincent Vitatoe from
12 Southwest Gas.

13 MR. VITATOE: Present.

14 ALJ FOGEL: Edward Lopez from
15 Utility Consumer -- from UCAN. I'm blanking on the full
16 name.

17 MR. LOPEZ: Present.

18 ALJ FOGEL: If you could remind us of the full
19 name, Mr. Lopez.

20 MR. LOPEZ: Utility Consumers Action Network.

21 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you. Great. Okay. Let's go
22 off the record for a minute.

23 (Off the record.)

24 ALJ FOGEL: We will go back on the record.

25 So when I was off the record, I just reviewed

1 the next steps in our agenda here, which is to address
2 motions for party status.

3 Are there any entities that would like to move
4 for party status? If you could please use the
5 raised-hand icon to raise your hand and I'll recognize
6 you.

7 Mr. Brian Turner, go ahead.

8 MR. TURNER: Hello. My name is Brian Turner.
9 I represent Advanced Energy United. We would like to
10 make a motion for party status. We have submitted a
11 motion to that effect, but I'm also prepared to make
12 that motion here.

13 Advanced Energy United is a trade organization
14 of about a hundred companies active in the clean energy
15 space, including in gas distribution infrastructure and
16 non-pipeline alternatives to gas distribution
17 infrastructure.

18 Within our staff, we also have expertise
19 specifically focused on gas transition issues such as
20 those scoped -- potentially scoped in Phase 3 of this
21 proceeding. So we would like to provide factual and
22 policy arguments regarding the issues to be addressed in
23 the proceeding.

24 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Turner. Would you
25 like to -- I may have missed it, but would you like to

1 offer a motion for party status?

2 MR. TURNER: I would. I am intending this to
3 be a motion for party status. Thank you.

4 ALJ FOGEL: Okay. Very good. The motion for
5 party status of...

6 MR. TURNER: Advanced Energy United.

7 ALJ FOGEL: Advanced Energy United is granted.

8 (Advanced Energy United was granted Party
9 Status.)

10 ALJ FOGEL: Mr. Turner, if you could please,
11 after this PHC, send me a procedural email with your
12 name, your title, organization, all the contact details,
13 I will get that to the Process Office and have you added
14 as a party. Thank you.

15 MR. TURNER: Thank you.

16 ALJ FOGEL: Ms. Rachael Koss, would you like to
17 move for party status as well?

18 MS. KOSS: Yes, your Honor. This is Rachael
19 Koss, R-a-c-h-a-e-l K-o-s-s, and I would move for the
20 California State Association of Electrical Workers to
21 become a party in this proceeding.

22 The State Association represents more than
23 83,000 union electrical workers throughout the state of
24 California and has worked for almost a hundred years to
25 improve the health and safety conditions for electrical

1 workers in the state.

2 The State Association would like to address the
3 impacts of declining natural gas use on workers, system
4 safety, system reliability and ratepayers, and the State
5 Association would also like to address creating
6 high-road jobs as part of the State's plan to transition
7 away from natural gas. Thank you.

8 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you. Very good. The motion
9 for party status of the California State Association of
10 Electrical Workers is granted.

11 (California State Association of Electrical
12 Workers was granted Party Status.)

13 ALJ FOGEL: Ms. Koss, if you could please also
14 send me a procedural email following this PHC just
15 listing the name, your title, the name, again, of your
16 organization, email, phone, et cetera, mailing address,
17 so that we can -- I'll make sure that you're added to
18 the list of parties.

19 MS. KOSS: Thank you, your Honor.

20 ALJ FOGEL: Very good. So thank you for that.
21 I believe that we have had -- President Alice Reynolds
22 has joined us in addition to Commissioner Karen Douglas.
23 I believe she has been elevated or is in the process of
24 being given a panelist link, so I welcome President
25 Reynolds and we'll assume that you'll get a panelist

1 link shortly.

2 But in the meantime, I'd like to invite
3 Commissioner Karen Douglas -- if you'd like to make a
4 few remarks before we move on.

5 Yes. Super. Thank you so much, Judge Fogel.

6 I wanted to say thank you and good afternoon to
7 everyone who's participating in today's prehearing
8 conference. I've been looking forward to this
9 opportunity to hear from you today.

10 As Judge Fogel noted, I'm Karen Douglas. I'm
11 the assigned commissioner to this proceeding, and we're
12 about to be joined by my Bagley-Keene partner on this
13 proceeding, President Alice Reynolds.

14 I was assigned this proceeding in 2023 when I
15 joined the Public Utilities Commission, and that was
16 long after some of the important work on this proceeding
17 by Commission staff and stakeholders had already begun
18 because I joined this -- I was assigned this as an
19 active proceeding. While it was probably not always
20 visible to people, I did spend a lot of time getting
21 myself familiar with the proceeding record and the work
22 that had been done prior to my appointment.

23 This is an important proceeding. This is the
24 proceeding where the Commission will identify and
25 carefully evaluate long-term gas planning actions to

1 support the State's ambitious climate goals in a manner
2 that also recognizes and supports affordability, safety,
3 reliability, and the interconnectedness between the gas
4 and electricity sectors.

5 And the stakes here are high, not only in light
6 of the importance of gas system decarbonization for
7 meeting our climate goals, but also for the
8 affordability and reliability of essential services for
9 Californians across the state.

10 On February 22, 2024, I issued the Assigned
11 Commissioner's Ruling proposing a scope and schedule for
12 the next phase of the proceeding. The ruling included a
13 joint agency staff gas transition white paper developed
14 by staff at the CPUC, the California Energy Commission,
15 and the California Air Resources Board, and I wanted to
16 pause a moment and just say a few words about the
17 purpose of the white paper and how it relates to our
18 work here.

19 As noted, the white paper was developed jointly
20 by staff at the PUC, the California Energy Commission,
21 the Air Resources Board with input from additional state
22 agencies. One thing it does is describe the scale and
23 importance of the natural gas or fossil gas as fuel in
24 California, as well as the importance of decarbonizing
25 the gas sector in order to support California's climate

1 goals.

2 The white paper discusses risks presented by
3 this transition, which must be anticipated and managed
4 to the extent possible, through the Commission's
5 authority and through strategic inter-agency planning
6 and coordination, among other measures, and these
7 include risks to affordability, safety, reliability, and
8 gas workforce. So those issues are all discussed in the
9 white paper.

10 The white paper also states that the transition
11 away from fossil gas must balance those risks and
12 protect vulnerable residents among other things. I look
13 forward to party comments on the white paper which was
14 attached to this ruling, and I wanted to take this
15 opportunity to express my thanks to the staff at all
16 three of the joint agencies, plus staff from other
17 agencies who participated in putting together this white
18 paper. And I, again, look forward to comments on it.

19 With that, I'll turn to the Assigned
20 Commissioner's Ruling. As I think you've all seen, the
21 proposed Phase 3 scope consists of four primary issue
22 areas which the ACR describes as "tracks." The ACR
23 asked parties for comment on the draft scope and
24 schedule, and I want to again express appreciation for
25 the comments that we've received so far and for what

1 we'll hear today and in reply comments.

2 I just wanted to make a few brief comments
3 about the tracks. Track 1 covers gas transition
4 scenario analysis. One primary benefit of these gas
5 transition scenarios could be to provide us with some
6 snapshots or schematics of what the gas system could
7 look like in the various utility territories, assuming
8 that the scoping plan scenario in the ARB's 2022
9 Scoping Plan is realized.

10 Of particular interest may be the way the
11 scenarios might illustrate potential outcomes for gas
12 system costs, customer rates, infrastructure, usage, and
13 more. And this information, after being vetted in the
14 process and by parties, could be used to inform Tracks 2
15 and 4 in this proceeding.

16 Another potential benefit could be to help
17 provide information that may lead us to better be able
18 to identify metrics and milestones that could help us
19 assess the trajectory in various utility service
20 territories in light of the scoping plan scenario. And,
21 again, I'll be looking forward and looking with interest
22 at comments on this set of topics.

23 Track 2 looks at long-term gas planning
24 approaches, methodologies, and objectives. I know we
25 have some parties who have very clear ideas for what

1 kind of analysis or what kind of planning the Commission
2 should be doing, and we'll look forward to hearing more
3 about that. We'll look forward to hearing other ideas
4 from parties. And we'll also look forward to taking a
5 minute to see what other jurisdictions are doing and
6 what we might be able to learn from different kinds of
7 planning approaches and methodologies.]

8 COMMISSIONER DOUGLAS: Track 3 considers
9 opportunities for interim action including some of the
10 more opportunistic or near term opportunities to -- or
11 actions that could reduce or defray investments in the
12 gas system, reduce costs, and occur concurrently with
13 longer term planning approaches.

14 And I think the one thing I wanted to say on
15 that is that the focus of this proceeding really is on
16 gas planning. And so I certainly hope and anticipate
17 that we will be able to identify some information that
18 could be valuable and useful in decarbonization
19 strategies.

20 But the implementation of decarbonization
21 programs or pilots will occur in probably those
22 proceedings or potentially actions outside of the CPUC
23 as well.

24 So to the extent that some of your comments
25 addressed, for example, building decarbonization, I'd

1 just like to suggest you consider putting those comments
2 in the appropriate proceeding as well -- or other
3 proceedings as well that seem appropriate.

4 Finally, Track 4 considers medium to
5 longer-term actions that may help reduce gas system
6 costs, avoid stranded assets, maintain reliability,
7 safety, and gas commodity cost containment. This
8 includes issues related to revenue requirement and
9 ratemaking. I very much look forward to engagement on
10 that one as well.

11 So the input you provide both on the ruling and
12 on the white paper will be carefully considered as we
13 look at the scope and schedule for Phase 3.

14 Again, I want to express my appreciation for
15 your participation in today's prehearing conference and
16 in this proceeding overall.

17 I'd like to thank Judge Fogel, staff from the
18 Commission's energy legal, and IT divisions for their
19 work on this prehearing conference. And, again, the
20 staff from the joint agencies that worked on the white
21 paper.

22 And I think, Judge Fogel, President Reynolds
23 may have some brief opening comments.

24 ALJ FOGEL: This is Judge Fogel.

25 President Reynolds, are you here with us?

1 PRESIDENT REYNOLDS: Very good. I'm here.
2 Yes.

3 Good afternoon, everyone. And thank you,
4 Commissioner Douglas, for the really thoughtful
5 introductory remarks. I will be very brief.

6 And I did want to start by thanking all of the
7 participants who are here today. I'm pleased to be here
8 and looking forward to listening and learning the
9 party's perspectives and early feedback in -- on the
10 long-term gas proceeding, and wanted to note that
11 success in this proceeding will really require
12 intentional collaboration with all of you, and your
13 participation is really very much appreciated throughout
14 the proceeding.

15 As Commissioner Douglas communicated, this
16 topic is critical to California.

17 We all know that as the State pursues its
18 climate goals, it needs to think very carefully about
19 long-term gas planning. And because, at this point
20 today, the gas system plays a major role in our economy,
21 of course. It delivers fuel to more than 11 million
22 customers for various purposes including heating up
23 buildings, electricity generation, and industrial
24 operations.

25 But we're here today because over the coming

1 decades California is very intensely focused on working
2 towards a transition away from fossil fuel -- fuel use.
3 And one of the goals in this proceeding is to take a
4 variety of considerations into account including
5 affordability, safety, and reliability particularly for
6 vulnerable communities.

7 And we are here at a time when affordability is
8 front of mind for Californians as energy costs are
9 adding to the burden of increases and the cost of living
10 in other areas. And so it's even more important now
11 than ever to think critically about our path and really
12 work on how to achieve it in a way that leaves no one
13 behind.

14 So, with that, I'm very much looking forward to
15 the discussion today, and this is what I consider to be
16 the first step in this journey towards a decarbonized
17 future for California, so thank you.

18 And I will pass it back to you, Judge Fogel.

19 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Commissioner Reynolds.

20 So what -- we will now move on to discuss and
21 hear from parties on the scope and the schedule and the
22 categorization of this proceeding.

23 As was just mentioned, the February 22nd
24 Assigned Commissioner's Ruling did identify four
25 potential tracks, which Commissioner Douglas spoke about

1 as well as President Reynolds just now.

2 And one thing to consider is we will need to
3 figure this out. But it's -- it's quite possible that
4 work on scenarios and on data and planning currently
5 identify as Tracks 1 and 2 may be together to support a
6 single decision also taking input from what's developed
7 in Track 3 and cost recovering other policy issues.

8 And then, secondly, if -- with potentially
9 reaching a second decision focusing on interim actions
10 supported also by -- by the proceeding record developed
11 in Track 4.

12 And we may also -- other lists of tracks now --
13 or the way I've mentioned it, we could also think of
14 these as somewhat more fluid tasks that, again, feed
15 into most -- quite possibly two decisions, but that's
16 all to be determined. So that's just by rule by way
17 of -- or further orientation.

18 And so now I'll go ahead and hear from -- from
19 you all.

20 And I put this -- speakers order in the chat.

21 So we'll go ahead and start in a moment with
22 Environmental Defense Fund.

23 And just to reiterate, we are hoping to take a
24 two -- maybe at most two-and-a-half hours today. So I
25 do request that parties limit their comments to two or

1 three minutes, and after that I may, you know, raise my
2 virtual actual hand to encourage you to wrap up.

3 Please go ahead.

4 I believe it's Beth Kelly from the
5 Environmental Defense Fund.

6 MS. KELLY: Thank you, your Honor.

7 Thank you, Commissioners.

8 Beth Kelly, B-e-t-h, Kelly, K-e-l-l-y with
9 Environmental Defense Fund.

10 And I really want to appreciate and call out
11 how much work went into the Commissioner's Ruling and
12 the thought of the different tracks and phases. And --
13 and I think it's a wonderful starting off point. And
14 I -- I really appreciate that.

15 A couple of things that I just want to mention
16 that are recommendations from EDF is, first, to start
17 out talking about the same thing.

18 What scenario are we going to plan for?

19 There are already scenarios at CARB and the CEC
20 and the Utility's own gas reports, so what scenarios are
21 we going to follow? What goals do we have, I think,
22 would be a foundational issue.

23 Next, the rulemaking originally identified
24 decarbonization and reliability plans as something that
25 the -- each utility would put forward.

1 And EDF encourages returning to that concept as
2 the solutions for decarbonization may look different in
3 each of the utility service areas.

4 And, in particular, I just want to note that
5 there are going to be different trajectories, pathways,
6 and solutions for different types of customers,
7 residential customers or core customers, electric
8 generators, and other non-core customers.

9 And we really need to tailor our solutions to
10 each of those end uses to ensure that we're making the
11 most cost effective decarbonization that we can.

12 And then one other note that I want to make is
13 that we do need to look differently at the
14 infrastructure that's already in place and the massive
15 amounts of undepreciated (sic) gas asset that's there,
16 what to do with that, and what to do with investments
17 going forward.

18 As we noted in our PHC statement, we strongly
19 encourage decisions to kind of come out sooner and
20 provide -- keep making steps towards making guidance for
21 the IOUs so that we can plan and adapt over time because
22 this isn't going to be static.

23 It -- it -- it's going to be an iterative
24 process over time.

25 And, again, just thank you all.

1 Those -- that's the extent of my comments for
2 now.

3 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Ms. Kelly.

4 And turning now to Mr. Matt Vespa from Sierra
5 Club.

6 MR. VESPA: Thank you, your Honor.

7 Matt Vespa for Sierra Club. Matt, M-a-t-t,
8 Vespa, V, as in Victor, -e-s-p, as in Paul, -a.

9 And just to uplift a couple points from our
10 comments, we feel strongly it mentions Track 3 should be
11 a priority here. I thought the scoping memo -- we
12 thought the scoping memo identified some really
13 interesting ideas like gas decommissioning options for
14 property owners such as the planned service line
15 replacement where an owner could potentially be offered
16 an option to decarbonize rather than have that pipeline
17 replaced.

18 This tees up a couple questions. What does
19 that look like? What information should be
20 communicated? How do we protect renters from that? How
21 should avoided costs be evaluated?

22 Like we -- we like to dig in to some of the
23 questions that enable the implementation so this can
24 move forward.

25 Commissioner Douglas, you made a comment about

1 where implementation should occur.

2 I -- I wasn't quite sure what to make of that.
3 My -- in my mind, this would be the place where we would
4 direct utilities to do that.

5 The building decarbonization proceeding
6 isn't -- doesn't seem to be the appropriate venue for
7 looking at how we redirect investments in gas
8 infrastructure to other options. And, certainly, a
9 general rate case is not the place for that either. So,
10 in our mind, this was the place to really build that out
11 and work it through, and we're excited about that
12 prospect.

13 And the other point I'll make is we do have
14 concerns about Track 1 not being particularly a good use
15 of this Commission's time and taking away from some of
16 the Track 3 other things we could actually do partly
17 because I think we should be leaning on our sister
18 agency.

19 And that was what that whole white paper was
20 about on some of these questions. So the CEC is
21 currently looking at a scenario for gas demand
22 forecasting that would be used for gas planning
23 purposes, for example.

24 CARB has already kind of mapped out sectorially
25 what the expectations should be for each sector, and so

1 I worry about this being duplicative when there are
2 certain things uniquely within the Commission's purview
3 they should focus on.

4 And also, I think, what everyone will expect
5 from different utilities. Then we'll just be kind of
6 having the same fights over how much hydrogen there is
7 and renewable gas there is when, I think, CARB has
8 spoken on what sectors really mean what.

9 So those are our key comments and appreciate
10 being here and the opportunity to speak. Thank you.

11 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Vespa.

12 Turning now to Mr. Jonathan Pendleton from
13 PG&E.

14 MR. PENDLETON: Good afternoon, your Honor.

15 Jonathan Pendleton for PG&E. It's
16 J-o-n-a-t-h-a-n P-e-n-d-l-e-t-o-n.

17 And thank you for the thoughtful ACR.

18 You know, these are -- one comment I wanted to
19 make in addition to what we stated in our comments on
20 the Phase 3 scoping memo is that obviously these are
21 highly complex issues and extremely important issues.

22 And, I think, that building a -- a thorough,
23 extensive record and encouraging collaboration, I think,
24 is going to be essential here. We recommended in our
25 comments scheduling workshops.

1 You -- the ACR also mentioned working groups.

2 I think both of those are great ideas because
3 they do get stakeholders talking.

4 And, I think, that in looking at the comments
5 on the Phase 3 scoping memo, there are a wide variety of
6 perspectives on which track to begin with first or
7 prioritize and ways to go about assessing these issues
8 and a lot of thoughtful perspectives. And, I think, as
9 much collaboration as we can encourage in this
10 proceeding would be really beneficial.

11 The -- in our comments PG&E emphasized
12 including customer affordability and utility cost
13 recovery issues in all of the tracks.

14 And we also emphasized Track 3, which would
15 maybe give us a -- a -- some guidance -- a start on
16 implementing some of the decarbonization efforts that
17 have been identified or -- or that we believe
18 potentially exists.

19 It would be helpful both to make progress --
20 you know, near-term progress, but also from a -- a
21 knowledge development perspective, from a piloting
22 perspective because these are new efforts in a lot of
23 respects. And, I think, the more information we can
24 gather, the more it will help the Commission and -- and
25 stakeholders.

1 Otherwise, I don't have anything to add to what
2 we've stated in our -- our comments, so thank you very
3 much.

4 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Pendleton.

5 Turning now to Southern California Gas and
6 SDG&E, Mr. Edward Hsu.

7 MR. HSU: Thank you, your Honor.

8 Edward Hsu, E-d-w-a-r-d, last name is spelled
9 H-s-u.

10 I had some prepared remarks that I'm going to
11 be offering on behalf of SoCalGas at this point.

12 SoCalGas requests the Commission evaluate the
13 part fuel cells and linear generation technologies can
14 play in the comprehensive solution needed to meet the
15 State's decarbonization goals during the planning
16 activities in Phase 3.

17 We, therefore, propose the following questions
18 be considered within the tracks.

19 Specifically, how can fuel cells and linear
20 generation technologies be effectively integrated into
21 California's existing energy infrastructure to support
22 the State's goals for decarbonization and building
23 electrification including for disadvantaged and
24 vulnerable communities?

25 Fuel cells and linear generators have the

1 potential to deliver electricity by leveraging existing
2 gas infrastructure with significantly lower emissions
3 relative to the traditional grid.

4 Electricity, these distributed energy resources
5 have the potential to accelerate building
6 electrification and could present a clean, expedient,
7 and cost-effective path toward achieving net zero goals.

8 Just as there are battery electric vehicles and
9 fuel cell electric vehicles, there can also be grid
10 power electric buildings, which rely on the electricity
11 supplied by traditional power grid and fuel cell
12 electric buildings, which can utilize onsite fuel cells
13 or linear generators to generate clean electric energy.

14 There are numerous decarbonization benefits
15 associated with using fuel cells and linear generators
16 to electrify buildings including immediate climate
17 benefits, relieving pressure on the electric grid in
18 both the near and long term supporting both reliability
19 and resiliency, rate and equity benefits, air quality
20 improvements and health savings, distributed energy
21 resources, action plan consistency, and avoided stranded
22 cost.

23 Fuel cells and linear generators can electrify
24 buildings when powered with traditional natural gas and
25 even greater benefits when fueled with renewable natural

1 gas and hydrogen. Fuel cells are proven technologies
2 used widely in other parts of the world.

3 And the American Recovery and Reinvestment
4 Act's allocation of over \$40 million has significantly
5 accelerated the commercialization and adoption of fuel
6 cells here in the U.S. by developing planning scenarios
7 that considered leveraging existing gas infrastructure
8 to electrify buildings.

9 Fuel cells and linear generators can help
10 address decarbonization challenges such as the scale and
11 pace of investments otherwise needed in electric
12 generation, transmission, storage, and distribution.

13 Consideration of these resources could also
14 support affordability and timely achievement of our
15 shared carbon neutrality goals, integrating the analysis
16 of the role of fuel cells, and linear generation can
17 play in the planning process can expand Commission and
18 stakeholder understanding on how such technologies could
19 complement the natural gas infrastructure transition.

20 That -- that concludes my -- that portion.

21 I also did want to request to ALJ Fogel I had
22 some responses to party's comments on written -- written
23 comments on scope.

24 I was wondering if now would be the time or
25 would you be allotting time later on to respond to other

1 parties comments?

2 ALJ FOGEL: (Line muted).

3 MR. HSU: I'm sorry. I can't hear.

4 ALJ FOGEL: So sorry. Am I unmuted?

5 MR. HSU: You're muted. Oh.

6 ALJ FOGEL: Could you -- yes. Let's wait for
7 those responses, if we could.

8 We'll come back to that a little bit later.

9 MR. HSU: Thank you, your Honor.

10 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you.

11 We'll now go ahead and hear from California
12 Environmental Justice Alliance.

13 MS. BEHLES: Thank you, your Honor.

14 My name is Deborah Behles, and I'm here to
15 represent the California Environmental Justice Alliance.
16 D-e-b-o-r-a-h, and last name is spelled B, as in boy,
17 -e-h-l-e-s, as in Sam.

18 First, I want to agree with the points made by
19 Mr. Vespa on behalf of Sierra Club.

20 In addition, I want to agree with the statement
21 made by President Reynolds on the importance of not
22 leaving anyone behind.

23 In this next Phase of the proceeding, CEJA
24 urges the Commission to focus specifically on equity and
25 the impacts of the gas transition on low income and

1 disadvantaged communities.

2 Communities that CEJA works with throughout the
3 state are already facing unaffordable energy bills and
4 the impacts of climate change. The time to act is now.

5 Costly additions to the gas system have
6 continued to be approved making the system more
7 unaffordable and locking in stranded assets.

8 Households in these communities face many
9 barriers to electrification including economic barriers
10 to afford capital costs, structural barriers such as
11 needing panel upgrades, and language and access
12 barriers.

13 The proceeding's focus should initially examine
14 what an equitable substitution of service for a
15 low-income household should occlude -- should include.

16 No other proceeding is looking at this issue,
17 and it's critical as more and more households are faced
18 with the decision of whether to -- of -- of
19 electrification or not.

20 This proceeding should also look at how to
21 tackle the many barriers that are faced by low income
22 and disadvantaged communities when making that decision
23 in coordination with other programs. This focus on
24 equity is critical to ensure the -- the gas transition
25 does not leave these communities behind.

1 This focus does not include a focus on linear
2 generation and fuel cells as the prior speaker noted.
3 These are costly used fossil fuels and delay the
4 ultimate transition to electrification.

5 In addition, this isn't the right proceeding to
6 start looking at a new technology such as linear
7 generation and fossil fuels.

8 To the extent that there is a focus on
9 resiliency, which is important, that focus should occur
10 within the distributed energy proceeding, microgrid
11 proceeding, or perhaps the IRP not here.

12 There are many equity issues to address in this
13 proceeding, and linear generation fuel cells is not one
14 of them.

15 Thank you.]

16 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Ms. Behles.

17 I just wanted to take a moment to try to
18 clarify, perhaps invite the commissioner to as well,
19 to -- regarding interim actions and what's envisioned as
20 potentially occurring there. I think a few things have
21 been mentioned, and some were mentioned in the Assigned
22 Commissioner's Ruling.

23 There's a number of actions that could be taken
24 potentially that may not include pilots. That -- those
25 may -- I think there's something that the details of

1 pilots may be more appropriate to address in other
2 rulemakings, but certainly to the extent there's
3 planning needed for those that involve cost recovery
4 questions related to gas, that may be squarely in this
5 proceeding.

6 Commissioner, would you like to add to that?

7 COMMISSIONER DOUGLAS: Yes, I would. I agree
8 with that. I don't want my comments to be
9 over-interpreted as saying implementation of anything in
10 the ACR is outside of the ACR. I think there were
11 interim actions that we've called out that very much
12 relate to gas planning and are very tightly tied to the
13 ambit of this proceeding.

14 And then there will be other actions or other
15 proceedings that really might be the right home for
16 other issues. And I think it will take us some work to
17 sort through what belongs where, you know, for me and,
18 for example, we have a decarbonization proceeding. Some
19 of the -- the really core decarbonization follows the
20 pilot's evaluation of other decarb pilots. We could
21 look to probably falling more there, but of course this
22 proceeding needs to be informed by that work.

23 And so I think parties can appreciate the
24 challenges we may have, at least initially, stepping
25 through and thinking about what is in scope for

1 long-term gas planning. I tried to give a few examples
2 early on, but I didn't want to overstate either and
3 we'll look forward to party comments, we'll try to be
4 very clear about scope, you know, when we move forward
5 here and as issues come up.

6 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Commissioner.

7 Now turning to Rebecca Meiers-De Pastino from
8 Southern California Edison Company.

9 MS. MEIERS-DEPASTINO: Hi, Judge. Sorry for
10 the delay. My computer was slow. (Inaudible.)

11 ALJ FOGEL: Excuse me one minute. Let's go off
12 the record.

13 (Off the record.)

14 ALJ FOGEL: We're on the record.

15 (Crosstalk.)

16 ALJ FOGEL: Ms. Sarah Kozal from CAISO.

17 MS. KOZAL: Thank you, your Honor. This is
18 Sarah Kozal for the CAISO, S-a-r-a-h, last name
19 K-o-z-a-l.

20 I'll keep my comments brief since these are
21 covered in more detail in our written comments, but just
22 generally want to make a statement of support for the
23 scope including the impacts of the gas system on gas
24 electrical liability.

25 To that point, the CAISO recommends

1 coordination with the Integrated Resource Planning
2 proceeding, or the IRP. The portfolios adopted in that
3 proceeding are direct inputs into the CAISO's planning
4 processes. And I'll note that in the most recent IRP,
5 the Commission adopted a high gas retirement sensitivity
6 case.

7 So generally we suggest coordinating between
8 these proceedings to ensure that the long-term gas
9 transition plans are aligned with the assumptions about
10 the gas generation fleet. This will allow the CAISO to
11 adequately plan to maintain electrical liability under
12 the long-term plans or directives.

13 Finally, I will note that, as others have
14 described or alluded to about the complexity of this
15 proceeding or endeavor, our comments highlight some
16 additional areas for consideration, most notably looking
17 at the impacts of increasing electrical demands that
18 could change the gas demand shape. So we certainly
19 support as much coordination between parties and
20 information sharing as possible. Thank you.

21 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Ms. Kozal.

22 Before I turn to the next speaker, I have had a
23 request. I've changed my earlier request. If all
24 parties who are not speaking could turn off your video
25 screens, that will help us manage this.

1 So next we have Seth Hilton from Air Products
2 and Chemicals.

3 MR. HILTON: Thank you. Good afternoon, your
4 Honor. Seth, S-e-t-h, Hilton, H-i-l-t-o-n, on behalf of
5 Air Products and Chemicals. I wanted to focus my
6 comments on Track -- the proposed Track 1, the gas
7 transition scenarios, and emphasize the importance of
8 considering and understanding the role of the private
9 sector, especially with regard to the development of low
10 carbon fuel infrastructure.

11 The private sector is already very active in
12 that space. They are currently in the process of
13 investing heavily in that sector, Air Products included.
14 And to the extent the private sector invests and takes
15 on the risks of the development of low carbon fuel
16 infrastructure or other infrastructure, that can have
17 significant impacts on our affordability challenges
18 rather than have that investment being funded by
19 ratepayers through utility systems.

20 That concludes my comments. Thank you.

21 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Hilton.

22 Vincent Vitatoe.

23 MR. VITATOE: Yes. Good afternoon. Vincent
24 Vitatoe on behalf of Southwest Gas, V-i-n-c-e-n-t
25 V-i-t-a-t-o-e.

1 Southwest Gas appreciates the opportunity to
2 provide input during this rulemaking. Southwest Gas
3 does not have any prepared remarks beyond what the
4 company filed in the comments aside from highlighting
5 Southwest Gas' request regarding the draft Phase 3
6 schedule. Specifically, Southwest Gas recommended a 15-
7 to 30-day extension, the proposed date regarding the
8 deadline to file comments on the white paper.

9 Thank you very much.

10 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Vitatoe. We will
11 consider your request and move on it a little later or
12 after this prehearing conference.

13 Turning now to Edward Lopez from UCAN.

14 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you very much, your Honor.
15 Edward, E-d-w-a-r-d, Lopez, L-o-p-e-z, on behalf of
16 UCAN, U-C-A-N, the Utility Consumers' Action Network.

17 UCAN would simply like to emphasize or even
18 reemphasize just a few points that were made in our
19 opening comments.

20 One, UCAN supports the prioritization of new
21 data collection and sharing requirements. We certainly
22 believe, as other parties have also commented upon, that
23 such data collection and development of data will be
24 crucial to long-term planning effects.

25 UCAN welcomes the reflection and recognition

1 and direction to authorize immediate or near-term
2 actions to start the transition, and of course like
3 other parties have already mentioned, the emphasis to
4 reduce gas system costs.

5 UCAN, however, does not suggest that the track
6 be dedicated to proceeding and going forth with gas
7 utility analysis for the simple sake of efficiency as
8 outlined by UCAN in its comments.

9 We support -- as I believe has already been
10 mentioned by prior parties -- the first focus should be
11 on Issue Area 3, opportunities for interim action, and
12 Issue Area 4, reducing gas system cost. UCAN proposes
13 that the Commission prioritize near-term opportunities
14 in the first cycle, 2024, midterm and near-term
15 opportunities in the second and third cycle, and,
16 finally, all types of proposals for subsequent cycles to
17 2025 Q3 and after. We, of course, propose -- and
18 consistent with our first point -- that the Commission
19 move data issues into the interim track opportunity
20 because that is the track for near-term actions.

21 Lastly, UCAN expresses its preference for a
22 proposal-and-comment process instead of work groups and
23 workshops. Proposals and comments allow every party to
24 make recommendations to the Commission and to build upon
25 and reflect and comment on other parties' proposals.

1 It has been UCAN's experience and observation
2 that in other parties at the Commission from time to
3 time even the simple development of agenda and
4 presentations can sometimes narrow or restrict the
5 following conversation and development of the record.
6 So, again, UCAN's preference is for a mere proposal and
7 comment process.

8 I take it, your Honor, then, you'll allow
9 parties to provide comments on categorization and need
10 for evidentiary hearings later, so thank you very much.

11 ALJ FOGEL: Actually, excuse me, Mr. Lopez. If
12 you could just go ahead and provide that now,
13 categorization and need for evidentiary hearing.

14 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you very much, your Honor.

15 UCAN concurs with the identification or
16 categorization of this being ratesetting. For the
17 moment, UCAN does not identify any factual issues that
18 may be best resolved through evidentiary hearings, but
19 UCAN would like to reserve the opportunity at a future
20 and appropriate date to perhaps make such a motion and,
21 of course, identify such factual issues at that point.

22 Thank you, your Honor.

23 ALJ FOGEL: Of course. I just have a question
24 for you, Mr. Lopez. In UCAN's written comments,
25 UCAN was -- and also in your remarks here you touched on

1 it -- did not express interest in Track 1. I'm curious
2 how do you -- this is a long-term gas planning
3 proceeding. How does UCAN envision that actual planning
4 would take place other than focus on interim actions
5 which you just stressed here?

6 MR. LOPEZ: Well, as was mentioned and cited by
7 another party as well, we do believe that there will be
8 other agencies and the work already done that could set
9 the parameters and framework as such, and then with
10 other proceedings as well. I believe already that the
11 commissioners themselves have emphasized the need and
12 reliance upon integrated planning.

13 I think that would help set sort of the corners
14 or the platform, but, quite frankly, just relying upon
15 IOU analysis and formulation, I think, would just not
16 lead to an efficient Track 1 outcome.

17 ALJ FOGEL: All right. Thank you, Mr. Lopez.

18 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you, your Honor.

19 ALJ FOGEL: Norman Pedersen, I'll call on you
20 in just one minute.

21 If we could see how -- let's go off the record
22 for a minute.

23 (Off the record.)

24 ALJ FOGEL: We'll be back on the record.

25 Now we'll hear from Mr. Norman Pedersen from

1 Southern California Generation Coalition.

2 MR. PEDERSEN: Thank you very much, your Honor.
3 Yes, the last name is pronounced "Pedersen," and it's
4 spelled P-e-d-e-r-s-e-n. First name is Norman,
5 N-o-r-m-a-n.

6 I'm speaking on behalf of the Southern
7 California Generation Coalition. We would like to
8 emphasize the importance of Track 4 in this proceeding.
9 Figure 4 on page 13 of the white paper showed that
10 annual gas utility revenue requirements are growing
11 inexorably.

12 There's an old saying. When you're in a hole,
13 the first thing you should do is stop digging. Figure 4
14 shows that the Commission continues relentlessly to dig.
15 In Phase 4, we hope the Commission will develop a
16 comprehensive cost containment strategy for the gas
17 utilities to bend the curve of the growth of annual
18 revenue requirements downward and, with that, bend the
19 growth of potential stranded costs downward.

20 I'd also like to say that we agree with
21 Mr. Lopez's observation that he just made about the
22 efficacy of the proposal and comment format. We did
23 have workshops throughout Phase 1 and into Phase 2
24 followed by comments. But oftentimes we found that
25 comments were really crystallized when we would get a

1 proposal from the Energy Division with a request for
2 comments -- a proposal from the Energy Division
3 circulated by an ALJ ruling and then comments. So we
4 think Mr. Lopez had a good idea.

5 With that, thank you very much, Your Honor.]

6 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Pederson.

7 We'll now hear from Ms. Rebecca Meiers-De
8 Pastino from SCE.

9 Please go ahead.

10 MS. MEIERS-DE PASTINO: Thank you, Judge.

11 Rebecca Meiers-De Pastino for Southern
12 California Edison Company. That's spelled R-e-b-e-c-c-a
13 M-e-i-e-r-s hyphen De Pastino, D-e space P-a-s-t-i-n-o.

14 I do not have prepared remarks today, Judge.

15 I think that our written comments on the ruling
16 clearly state Edison's position.

17 And the only thing that I would like to
18 emphasize is that while we agree that data sharing is
19 going to be an important issue, we would like the
20 Commission to recognize that there are differences
21 between the service territories where you have gas and
22 electric utilities with shared obligations and Edison's
23 territory where we do not have a gas component, and,
24 therefore, the sharing of data with entities that have
25 both services will present unique challenges with

1 respect to confidentiality, both customer data as well
2 as market sensitive data.

3 And we do think that that is going to be an
4 important issue that the Commission will have to resolve
5 before we can get deeply into planning.

6 That concludes my remarks. Thank you.

7 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Ms. Meiers-De Pastino.

8 We'll now hear from Rachel Koss from -- if you
9 could introduce yourself and who you are representing,
10 please.

11 MS. KOSS: Yes. Good afternoon.

12 My name is Rachel Koss.

13 I'm here today on behalf of the Coalition of
14 California Utility Employees, the Western States Council
15 of Sheet Metal Workers, the California State Pipe Trades
16 Council, and the California State Association of
17 Electrical Workers.

18 First, we wanted to thank Commissioner Douglas
19 for jumping into this incredibly important and very
20 thorny planning process. The ruling was quite -- quite
21 thought -- thoughtful.

22 Whichever path the State takes in transitioning
23 away from natural gas, there are going to be impacts to
24 workers, including gas utility employees and
25 construction workers, particularly plumbers.

1 The Commissioner's Ruling and the agency paper
2 recognize this, but the ruling does not include
3 workforce impacts in the prelim -- preliminary scope of
4 Phase 3.

5 There is no other Commission proceeding
6 addressing these impacts.

7 The Commission should specifically include
8 identifying and addressing workforce impacts as an issue
9 within scope of the Phase 3 planning process.

10 With sufficient lead time, we can mitigate
11 these impacts. They cannot be addressed as an
12 afterthought. We see this issue as fitting in to
13 several of the tracks, but really the key is the sooner
14 the better. We need enough lead time.

15 The planning efforts should include retaining
16 the skilled workforce that's necessary to keep the gas
17 system safe and reliable as long as it is being used.

18 Planning should also include policies to avoid
19 layoffs, to retrain workers, to protect workers wages,
20 and to provide incentives for other utilities, electric
21 utilities, water utilities, to hire displaced workers.

22 In addition, as part of the Phase 3 planning
23 process, the Commission should promote creating
24 high-road jobs consistent with State policy including
25 the Commission's own environmental, social justice, and

1 action plan, and its memorandum of understanding with
2 the Workforce Development Board.

3 The State's transition should support
4 high-quality jobs and create opportunities for
5 disadvantaged workers by adopting workforce and
6 contractor standards consistent with the State's
7 high-road jobs model.

8 Thank you very much. We look forward to
9 working with the commissioner, your Honor, and all of
10 the parties.

11 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Ms. Koss.

12 Turning now to Melissa Kasnitz, Center for
13 Accessible Technologies.

14 MS. KASNITZ: Thank you, your Honor.

15 Melissa Kasnitz, K-a-s-n-i-t-z with Center for
16 Accessible Technology representing the interests of
17 utility customers with disabilities, medical needs, and
18 vulnerabilities.

19 I'd like to stand on our written submissions,
20 but I want to emphasize one procedural point and a
21 couple of substantive points.

22 Procedurally, I would like to re-emphasize the
23 request that we made that the docket be structured to
24 allow for effective participation by small interveners
25 with a way to avoid having to become entangled in areas

1 where we may not have much of a contribution and focus
2 on those areas where our input will help.

3 The example I gave is issues of -- of highly
4 technical nature might benefit from a working group
5 process where the parties that have expertise in those
6 areas hopefully will be able to pursue some types of
7 consensus.

8 While on the more disputed issues of policy,
9 those technical issues could be set aside, and
10 intervenors who have input on those areas would be
11 better able to participate.

12 Substantively, I appreciate the importance
13 that's already been placed on the need to balance
14 concerns about affordability with the important clean
15 energy goals that we have.

16 I'd note that there's an emphasis on
17 affordability in ESJ communities, which, of course, is
18 crucial, but I would like to emphasize that
19 affordability impacts are going to be very substantial
20 even outside of targeted geographical communities. And
21 there will be impacted vulnerable cost reverse including
22 CforAT's constituency of customers with medical needs
23 who might be outside of targeted ESJ communities but
24 still need focused attention on affordability impacts.

25 And, finally, per our written comments, I would

1 like the proceeding to consider ways to balance the
2 externalized costs and benefits of clean energy, the
3 clean energy transition including public health
4 benefits.

5 While those don't show up directly in utility
6 bills, the importance of those benefits of moving away
7 from fossil gas are also vitally important to our
8 constituency and to Californians in general.

9 Thank you.

10 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Ms. Kasnitz.

11 And just a question, if I may, regarding your
12 suggestion regarding working groups.

13 If I understood, you suggested that working
14 groups are easier sometimes for smaller interveners to
15 participate in.

16 Did I -- did I understand correctly?

17 MS. KASNITZ: I'm sorry. I -- I wasn't clear.

18 I think there are some topics that are perhaps
19 more suited to working groups.

20 And, in my experience, technical fix often are
21 well-addressed in that environment.

22 But in terms of other areas, my written
23 comments expressed the preference to staff proposals and
24 comments along the lines of what you can suggest it.

25 I found technical topics where experts can --

1 a -- a less formal exchange of ideas often benefit but
2 other more policy-oriented topics often benefit from
3 having a specific proposal on the table and responses to
4 the -- those proposals.

5 ALJ FOGEL: Okay. Thank you for clarifying.

6 MS. KASNITZ: Thank you.

7 ALJ FOGEL: Turning now to Ms. Nora Sheriff
8 from Indicated Shippers.

9 MS. SHERIFF: Good afternoon, President
10 Reynolds, Commissioner Douglas, your Honors.

11 Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

12 I'm Nora Sheriff on behalf of the Indicated
13 Shippers.

14 I'll speak briefly to the issues that the
15 Indicated Shippers think should be prioritized and then
16 touch on the schedule and the categorization.

17 First, and with all do recognition for the
18 Commission's rulemaking on building electrification and
19 the Energy Commission's pilots that are undergoing
20 building electrification because building
21 electrification and building decarbonization is such a
22 major focus of the California Air Resources Board
23 scoping plan, the Indicated Shippers see as a
24 foundational need to have data on customer choice and
25 cost sensitivities around building electrification to

1 inform our long-term planning on California's transition
2 away from fossil gas.

3 We think we need comprehensive pilot data to
4 have a most effective plan, most effective -- most
5 cost-effective plan for that transition.

6 The pilots could occur outside of this
7 proceeding. Obviously, they could occur in front of the
8 Energy Commission, but we do need to gather that data
9 and to use that data here.

10 Regarding the Utility's gas transition plans
11 addressing decarbonization and reliability, Indicated
12 Shippers have in the past strongly supported requiring
13 such plans, and we do continue to support that.

14 We do want to raise a concern with setting
15 those initial plans too firmly before we have the needed
16 data on customer choice and cost sensitivities.

17 This is because sometimes there can be nothing
18 so permanent as the temporary or the initial or the
19 interim.

20 So I would like to emphasize that if we do
21 start with utility decarbonization and reliability
22 plans, there has to be sufficient flexibility for later
23 iterations to be informed by the critical pilot data on
24 consumer choice and cost sensitivities towards building
25 electrification.

1 And, again, it circles back to the CARB scoping
2 plan's focus on building electrification as a major
3 component of getting us to 2045.

4 The second issue that we see as a high priority
5 is the need to find non-ratepayer sources for funding.

6 The Commission should elevate not just the need
7 to find non-ratepayers sources for funding but also
8 SCG's point, Mr. Pederson's point, about stopping the
9 digging reducing systems costs. That needs to be
10 elevated not just in this gas policy proceeding but in
11 every single proceeding that this Commission is
12 addressing now and over the course of the next several
13 years.

14 The affordability crisis is real, and it has
15 got to be a priority everywhere not just -- not just
16 here.

17 Indicated Shippers also agrees and emphasizes
18 that different customer groups will have different
19 trajectories and need different solutions and that hard
20 to electrify large industrial customers will need to
21 continue having gas service for a longer time than other
22 customer segments.

23 Regarding schedule, we think first we should
24 focus on working groups for those consumer choice pilots
25 or we could farm that out with the high-priority task to

1 it -- to the building decarbonization rulemaking or the
2 Energy Commission.

3 And, second, a working group looking for
4 non-ratepayer sources of funding to help us develop this
5 strategic framework that we really do need to be
6 successful in this transition.

7 Regarding categorization and the need for
8 hearings, this should remain ratesetting regarding
9 evidentiary hearings.

10 If we get into questions around revenue
11 requirement changes, around cost recovery, cost
12 allocation, evidentiary hearings may be needed.

13 You maybe need something more than workshops
14 and comments to deal with those thornier questions, but
15 I would, you know, reserve that specifically for when
16 those questions come up.

17 Thank you, your Honor.

18 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Ms. Sheriff.

19 And just to make sure I heard correctly, you
20 suggested two working groups to start the work of
21 Phase 3, one regarding -- which you've felt consumer
22 choice pilots and the second regarding non-ratepayer
23 sources of funding.

24 Did I -- did I get that correctly?

25 MS. SHERIFF: Yes, your Honor.

1 And that, at this point, are in our written
2 comments as well.

3 ALJ FOGEL: Okay. Thank you.

4 All right. Turning now to Kiki Velez from
5 NRDC.

6 MS. VELEZ: Hi. Thank you.

7 This is Kiki Velez. That's K-i-k-i and then V,
8 as in Victor, -e-l-e-z with the Natural Resources
9 Defense Council.

10 And as was noted earlier, we filed comments
11 jointly with Sierra Club and with the California
12 Environmental Justice Alliance.

13 And I -- I agree with everything that they've
14 said in their previous statements.

15 But I wanted to use my time to just uplift a
16 key point of our comment and to emphasize and explain
17 our recommendation to immediately focus on the issue
18 area, three issues listed in the Assigned Commissioner
19 Ruling.

20 So as other parties have -- have mentioned,
21 there is a growing affordability crisis related to the
22 gas system.

23 And just to point -- put a finer point on some
24 of those affordability issues that have been raised, gas
25 utilities are continuing to invest millions of dollars

1 to replace gas distribution pipelines, and customers
2 will be expected to pay off those pipelines over
3 potentially the next six decades well beyond our
4 building electrification goals.

5 So we think it's critically important to
6 immediately increase transparency, and to gas utilities
7 planned investments, and also to consider and evaluate
8 opportunities to avoid replacing gas distribution
9 pipelines by using non-pipeline alternatives.

10 And we appreciate -- really appreciate the
11 recommendation in the Assigned Commissioner Ruling to
12 consider alternatives to pipeline investments such as
13 offering households the opportunity to electrify.

14 But we also just want to emphasize the
15 importance of urgently getting greater transparency
16 outside of the GRC into proposed gas distribution
17 investments.

18 And when I've heard some other parties mention
19 the importance of aligning gas planning with electric
20 system planning, especially electric generation, and
21 while that is an important consideration, we think
22 there's an urgent opportunity to unlock cost savings by
23 more stringently evaluating some of the planned
24 investments on the gas distribution system.

25 So I -- for example, as the white paper

1 mentioned, PG&E has conducted some research and found
2 that zonal electrification offers a cost effective
3 non-pipeline alternative for a lot of their planned gas
4 investments.

5 So just want to strongly encourage the
6 Commission to take up the issue of improving
7 transparency over planned gas distribution system
8 investments and to evaluate non-pipeline alternatives.

9 And just want to uplift -- some examples from
10 some other states that have begun to do this, we've seen
11 movement in Colorado and in New York and Massachusetts
12 in requiring gas utilities to file gas distribution
13 plans outside of their typical GRC to provide more
14 transparency to the Commission, to stakeholders, to
15 uphold communities and -- and also to enable
16 consideration of non-pipeline alternatives.

17 So we hope -- we hope to see this -- the
18 Commission take up that -- a similar -- a similar
19 approach to saving gas -- gas customers money by
20 avoiding those investments.

21 Thank you.

22 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you. Thank you very much.

23 MS. VELEZ: May I -- sorry. I -- may I just
24 note one more thing.

25 I have to leave the prehearing conference now

1 to catch a flight, but I want to note that NRDC agrees
2 with the positions that -- whatever positions are raised
3 later by Sierra Club and CEJA.

4 Thanks.

5 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you.

6 I'd like to turn in a minute to Brian Turner
7 from Advanced Energy United.

8 I think I had accidentally put --
9 (indecipherable) chemicals twice and not included
10 Advanced Energy.

11 So in just a minute we'll turn to you, but
12 first we'll hear from -- and then Jonathan Newlander
13 from San Diego Gas & Electric.

14 Can I confirm that you're -- would like to pass
15 and associate yourself with Southern California Gas's
16 comments; is that correct?

17 MR. NEWLANDER: Your Honor, what I would say is
18 that Mr. Hsu's remarks were made on behalf of Southern
19 California Gas Company.

20 I don't intend to say anything in opposition to
21 that.

22 For my comments for today, I'll just point to
23 our -- our written comments and not add any -- add
24 anything further beyond that.

25 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you.

1 So we'll hear from Marion Peleo from Public
2 Advocates Office and then Brian Turner from Advanced
3 Energy United.

4 Please go ahead, Marion, I believe it was.

5 MR. PELEO: Thank you, your Honor.

6 Marion Peleo, for the Public Advocates Office,
7 M-a-r-i-o-n P-e-l-e-o.

8 And I'm just going to be very brief.

9 We'd like to express our general support for
10 the proposed scope as laid out in the ACR as well as the
11 tracked approach.

12 We agree with the comments of several parties
13 that work in each track should be to the extent possible
14 done concurrently rather than strictly phased.

15 And we see value in -- in having workshops and
16 technical working groups led by Energy Division staff as
17 well as party comments on any rulings or staff proposals
18 that come out of any workshops or working group meetings
19 as the most organized or efficient way, an efficient way
20 to build the record in this proceeding.

21 And very quickly as to evidentiary hearings
22 come, I don't know yet whether we're going to need any
23 of those. But as to the categorization, we renew our
24 support for keeping this a ratesetting proceeding.

25 We understand that some of the ratesetting and

1 other funding type things may happen in different
2 proceedings, but the benefit of having the ex parte
3 rules of ratesetting proceedings apply to this are
4 valuable.

5 Thank you.]

6 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you. Brian Turner from
7 Advanced Energy United.

8 MR. TURNER: Good afternoon, Judge Fogel,
9 again. Thank you for the opportunity to provide some
10 brief opening comments.

11 United -- on the question of prioritization and
12 topics, while we think that all the questions posed by
13 the Commission are relevant and timely, we are
14 particularly interested in the questions in Tracks 2, 3,
15 and 4 regarding long-term gas planning approaches,
16 including an exploration of work in other jurisdictions.

17 Advanced Energy United is a national trade
18 organization. We have been involved in those dockets in
19 Colorado, Massachusetts, and New York in particular and
20 would be interested in sharing some of the lessons
21 learned there.

22 In coordination between gas and electric
23 utilities as well, the data access and risk mitigation
24 issues, short-term actions, and medium- and long-term
25 options to reduce gas system costs and avoid stranded

1 assets via ratemaking and rate reform.

2 Given that building electrification and
3 efficiency technologies are rapidly innovating and that
4 many United member companies are providing those
5 technologies and strategies, we propose adding a
6 question in Track 3 to explore the technologies and
7 third-party providers, including gas demand response,
8 thermal energy networks, new measurement and
9 verification technologies, and energy efficiency
10 techniques and the intentional paring of these
11 technologies that support the transition.

12 We believe the docket should create a pathway
13 to move promising technologies from this discussion into
14 real-world programs.

15 Within the sequencing of tracks, we believe
16 that Track 2 is particularly important because of the
17 long-term investments in gas infrastructure and that
18 resource planning process needs to start now so that
19 each year that passes without a transparent process to
20 identify gas system needs and compare the traditional
21 solutions with non-pipeline alternative risks committing
22 hundreds of millions of dollars of ratepayer dollars on
23 infrastructure that may soon become under or unutilized.
24 So we believe the Track 2 should be prioritized.

25 And similarly, to the extent that Track 3 can

1 produce near-term actions such as gas demand response
2 and thermal energy network pilot projects, we hope that
3 will be fast-tracked.

4 So in summary, our recommendation would be to
5 begin Tracks 2 and 3 this spring and then initiate
6 Tracks 1 and 4 later on in the year. And that concludes
7 our remarks. Thank you.

8 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Turner.

9 Turning to Ron Liebert from California
10 Manufacturers & Technology Association.

11 MR. LIEBERT: Thank you, your Honor, this is
12 Ron Liebert for CMTA, R-o-n L-i-e-b-e-r-t.

13 In general, we're okay with the scope of this
14 proceeding, especially if all the issues raised in the
15 white paper are included. We're especially pleased that
16 the white paper recognizes the unique issues faced by
17 manufacturing industrial sector, many of whom are hard
18 to electrify.

19 It is imperative, however, to recognize that
20 the manufacturing industrial sector is and must be
21 treated differently than other sectors and require
22 different policies, in particular much longer planning
23 time horizons.

24 So we're concerned about doing the tracks
25 concurrently, especially jumping past Tracks 1 and 2.

1 We agree with Indicated Shippers about the need to
2 gather data and find non-ratepayer sources of funding,
3 in particular to incentivize decarbonization efforts.

4 Manufacturing industrial customers recognize
5 the importance of reducing the use of natural gas, but
6 we have significant concerns with assumptions regarding
7 their ability and speed to decarbonize and convert
8 natural gas equipment processes and operations to
9 electrical power.

10 As the white paper says specifically,
11 industrial facilities are technically harder to
12 electrify, and many industrial electric technologies are
13 still in the developmental stage. And so one key issue
14 that needs to be considered here is that we need
15 commercially available and cost-effective electrified
16 gas replacement equipment. In general, it's not
17 available. And many processes are somewhat unique and
18 require specialty design projects.

19 And so we can't go forward with decarbonization
20 efforts until we have this equipment available. And how
21 do we -- and then there's a long time horizon when
22 replacing equipment is part of the manufacturing
23 industrial processes. There's replacement equipment,
24 there's shut-down of equipment. It could take months to
25 replace things.

1 So there's a lot of time horizons that have to
2 be met here. And if we speed things up and try to do
3 everything at once and just say get it done, companies
4 are going to be forced to decide is it worth doing or
5 unfortunately leaving or just shutting things down
6 because it's just not cost effective to do or simply
7 can't be done if the time horizon is too short.

8 So we think it's very important that that be
9 kept in mind as a process here. This is not a matter of
10 putting heat pumps or things that already are available
11 for residential small commercial customers. We just
12 don't have these things available.

13 The other thing that has to be considered and
14 we've heard other parties talk about is about gas rates.
15 One that concerns here as well is if we are in a longer
16 time horizon to decarbonize because we can't do it any
17 quicker, the concern is, of course, is that gas rates
18 are going to keep increasing, which some argue is great
19 because it incentivizes everyone to decarbonize.

20 But that also could do the opposite and incent
21 industry that can't do it quickly or it's going to take
22 a while to, again, decide to move some place else. If
23 they're going to have to rebuild an entire project,
24 maybe it's better just to start from scratch somewhere
25 else. So all these things have to be kept in

1 consideration.

2 I also want to emphasize one more thing and
3 that is the link between gas and electric. In other
4 proceedings, the Commission has heard from some
5 industrial customers, and I believe one was an aluminum
6 smelting company that noted that they use two megawatts
7 now with a natural gas furnace. If they had to switch
8 to an electric furnace, they need 70 megawatts.

9 And so now we're talking about needing the T&D
10 infrastructure and upstream work on substations,
11 et cetera, which the utilities and other related
12 proceedings have said could take years to get done, even
13 if you file an application now. And of course you can't
14 file applications now because they don't have the
15 equipment that's available to make these changes.

16 So we have a chicken-and-the-egg problem. We
17 can address it, but we need the time to do it. Also I
18 just want to mention that replacing natural gas with
19 hydrogen and biomethane is not necessarily a fix. Some
20 industrial processes actually use the gas in the
21 process, and it indicated that hydrogen and biomethane
22 have different characteristics and may not be able to
23 make a quick switch.

24 Lastly, I would like to emphasize a couple
25 things in the white paper. There was a discussion about

1 additional engagement with industry stakeholders as
2 needed to better assess potentials for electrification
3 and addressing barriers. Great idea. Investing in
4 innovation to commercialize solutions, absolutely.
5 Pilot projects if that would help.

6 But we've heard a lot, hear this a lot, seen
7 this a lot in other proceedings people saying, "Oh,
8 there's research out there. People are working on this
9 stuff." Keep in mind, please, unless it's commercially
10 available, it doesn't help us at all.

11 So and finally, just financial incentives.
12 Anything that can help, we appreciate it. We certainly
13 believe that this is a statewide issue, and hopefully
14 there could be statewide or federal money to help with
15 this. Thank you very much.

16 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Liebert. Appreciate
17 that.

18 Jennifer Weberski from SBUA.

19 MS. WEBERSKI: Thank you, your Honor.
20 Jennifer, J-e-n-n-i-f-e-r, Weberski, W-e-b-e-r-s-k-i for
21 Small Business Utility Advocates, or SBUA.

22 First, to start, we support Southwest Gas'
23 proposed extension on the comments for the white paper
24 for an additional -- I believe it was -- 15 days. We
25 think that would be necessary in order for robust

1 comments to be offered.

2 We also agree with, but I also want to
3 emphasize, we agree with comments by CEJA, Ms. Kasnitz,
4 and Ms. Sherr (sic) regarding the affordability issues.
5 But those issues don't just effect the ESJ or low-income
6 or disadvantaged communities. They also affect small
7 business customers as well.

8 Small business customers are also facing the
9 crushing utility bills that have affected everybody in
10 California, but small business customers are also facing
11 being pushed out of the marketplace in California and
12 having to close down small businesses because they
13 cannot face the increased burdens of these utility bills
14 on top of the inflation and the other costs that have
15 affected these small businesses.

16 So we propose that any affordability issues
17 should be strewn throughout all the tracks, and it has
18 to be an overarching discussion point as the topics are
19 addressed.

20 We would support Ms. Sheriff's proposal to look
21 outside of ratepayers for funding. We support the use
22 of both workshops and working group to address those
23 issues. I also agree with what Ms. Kasnitz said about
24 how we can structure so that smaller intervenors can
25 efficiently advocate in this proceeding, and it's an

1 efficient use of our time and our resources.

2 That's often done sometimes through the working
3 group process but also having the comments address a
4 staff proposal. That's sometimes the most efficient
5 means for small intervenors when a staff proposal is
6 offered and then comments can follow.

7 We agree with the ratesetting designation, and
8 at this point evidentiary hearings may be necessary, but
9 we do think a lot can be achieved through the
10 workshop/working group process.

11 Thank you, your Honor.

12 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you very much.

13 Lilly McKenna from Shell Energy Solutions.

14 MS. MCKENNA: Thank you, your Honor. Lilly
15 McKenna, L-i-l-l-y M-c-K-e-n-n-a appearing on behalf of
16 Shell Energy.

17 We appreciate the opportunity to participate
18 today as a party to the proceeding but have no comments
19 to add at this time as to the scope or schedule.

20 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you. All right. We've heard
21 already from Ms. Koss who represented several parties at
22 once. So the next speaker is going to be Gene Nelson
23 from Californians for Green Nuclear Power.

24 If you're here, Mr. Nelson, please go ahead.

25 MR. NELSON: (Line muted.) Okay. There we go.

1 I think we're cooking now. All right.

2 So I first referenced CGNP's previously filed
3 written comments. Many speakers today have addressed
4 the issue of affordability, and I agree that that should
5 be in fact part of every single track.

6 This particular issue of affordability was
7 raised in both the senate and the assembly hearings
8 regarding the oversight of the PUC to simply define a
9 plan without looking at affordability is really
10 unconscionable. So that is -- that's Part 1.

11 Part Number 2 is what the heck are we doing?
12 When we look at the tens of billions of dollars that
13 this state has expended so far on decarbonizing of the
14 electric system allegedly by putting in lots of solar
15 and wind, and when we actually look at what are the
16 outcomes of that by utilizing the data from the U.S.
17 Energy Information Administration, we see no benefits.
18 So tens of billions of dollars for nothing. Is this
19 going to be a continuation of that same kind of not
20 getting cost effective results?

21 And then we really need to be also looking at
22 the engineering rather than just some nice special
23 interest group saying, "Oh, we gotta do this." We have
24 to pay attention to the physics. We have to pay
25 attention to the engineering, and in particular, we are

1 very alarmed by the possibilities of basically getting
2 rid of a lot of natural gas fire generation and
3 replacing it with things that destabilize the grid. So
4 we need to be looking at those issues.

5 Some small issues, Southern California Edison
6 notes that like the -- in the Southern California Edison
7 territory, there are different providers of natural gas
8 and electricity. That's also true for the California
9 Central Coast where our electricity provider is PG&E,
10 and our natural gas provider is SoCalGas, as it is for
11 the SCE service territory.

12 In Track 3, we are particularly concerned about
13 carbon leakage from unspecified imports. This was a
14 concern that's been raised by Cullenward and Weisskopf.
15 If we don't look holistically -- and this really means
16 that Track 3 has to look holistically -- we could
17 actually reduce -- let's take the hypothetical of we
18 would electrify a large part of what was done with
19 natural gas, but because of that leakage from
20 unspecified imports, we completely nullify it.

21 So those are the kinds of things that we would
22 like looked at is, again, make sure that we really
23 aren't making the situation worse, which is what appears
24 to be the case so far.

25 Thank you for your attention.

1 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Dr. Nelson.

2 Joe Karp, if you could please introduce
3 yourself and who you represent.

4 MR. KARP: Thank you, your Honor. My name is
5 Joe Karp. It's J-o-e K-a-r-p. I'm representing Calpine
6 and SMUD.

7 We look forward to participating in this phase
8 of the proceeding, and I have nothing further to add to
9 the discussion at this time. Thank you.

10 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Karp.

11 And finally, Lisa Cottle from Central Valley
12 Gas Storage.

13 MS. COTTLE: Yes. Thank you, your Honor. We
14 appreciate the opportunity to appear. My name is Lisa
15 Cottle, L-i-s-a C-o-t-t-l-e, and I represent Central
16 Valley Gas Storage, LLC.

17 Central Valley Gas Storage is an independent
18 storage provider. They own and operate a gas storage
19 facility in Northern California, and we wanted to appear
20 today to signal our intent to participate in this
21 proceeding as an active party, but we don't otherwise
22 have any comments, so thank you again.

23 ALJ FOGEL: Great. Thank you very much.

24 I believe we've gone through the list of
25 speakers. I'd like to in a minute offer any party that

1 would like to to make some remarks and response to other
2 parties, whether that's other parties' written comments
3 or something that's been said today. That's something
4 that SoCalGas asked for.

5 Before I do that, I would like to ask a
6 question to PG&E, Mr. Pendleton. You're still here.
7 Thank you. I wanted to ask a question about something
8 that was in your comments on this phase where you
9 mentioned two additional questions you thought Phase 3
10 should address.

11 The second one was how should the CPUC
12 coordinate decarbonization activities in areas served by
13 publicly owned utilities. I was wondering if you could
14 elaborate on that, what you -- why you think that
15 question is important and, in particular, why you
16 stressed the CPUC coordinating activities in lieu of,
17 for example, PG&E and SMUD undertaking your own
18 coordination.]

19 MR. PENDLETON: Thank you, your Honor.

20 John Pendleton for PG&E.

21 The reason we included that, your Honor, is
22 that -- is part of the -- the transition planning, the
23 interim opportunities. You know, there's a significant
24 part of our service territory where we provide the gas
25 service, but other entities, publicly owned utility,

1 provide the electric service.

2 And it -- it -- it seemed that it would be --
3 is really as part of this more -- kind of a holistic
4 planning that we're trying to do in this proceeding that
5 we should consider that in terms of -- you know,
6 opportunities that are identified in those areas.

7 I -- I think that when we saw in the scoping
8 memo there was a reference to dual fuel utilities, I
9 think that's what triggered that because it -- as we
10 stated in our comments that it's mostly true but not
11 entirely true for PG&E.

12 And so we wanted to -- to raise that issue
13 for -- for consideration. It really is part of planning
14 overall recognizing that -- that the POUs are not CPUC
15 jurisdictional, but we've felt it should be at least
16 considered in -- in -- in the transition planning
17 analysis.

18 ALJ FOGEL: Yeah. Thank you.

19 Yeah. The -- the -- the challenge is related
20 to the coordination overlap with POUs, I think, will be
21 part of the planning process.

22 I think my question goes more to, you know,
23 should it be framed as something where, for instance, in
24 this case, if PG&E and SMUD, there can be planning
25 between year two utilities, which is then brought to

1 this Commission for consideration.

2 Why does this Commission need to coordinate
3 that, your communications and efforts with SMUD in
4 particular?

5 And maybe other POUs would have different
6 situations but just that particular situation.

7 MR. PENDLETON: Yeah. I think that particular
8 situation, your Honor, we wouldn't be looking to the
9 Commission to sort of direct that coordination. Really,
10 was looking to have it more factored into the overall
11 planning.

12 I -- I believe we would look forward to working
13 with some of those issues and have been. You know,
14 it's -- it's a very cooperative relationship in that
15 regard, and I think that we expect that to continue.

16 But -- but it is a factor as -- as we look at
17 certain, say, zonal electrification efforts where in
18 some cases we -- in -- in most cases for PG&E, we
19 provide both the gas and the electric service and -- and
20 can coordinate those transitions.

21 In other areas, we don't and would have to rely
22 on that type of cooperation. So it -- it -- but it --
23 we weren't looking for, necessarily, really a directive
24 or coordination by the Commission in that regard.

25 ALJ FOGEL: Okay. Thank you.

1 There was one -- before we -- I invite other
2 parties that might like to make responses to parties.

3 There was a request from Southwest Gas that was
4 also supported by, I believe, the Small Business Utility
5 Advocates to move back the date for comments on the
6 white paper.

7 That seems to be something we can do
8 considering moving it back to April 15th as a due date
9 for comments on the white paper as opposed to -- I
10 believe currently is March 28th.

11 I'll just say that now as a -- as an option
12 and -- and also go ahead and invite any parties that
13 would like to -- like to make a response to other
14 parties to please raise your hand.

15 I think maybe not that many parties will want
16 to do that, so if you could just identify yourselves by
17 raising your hand, your virtual hand.

18 Okay. We'll start with Ed Hsu from SoCalGas.

19 Please go ahead.

20 MR. HSU: Thank you, your Honor.

21 This is Edward Hsu for Southern California Gas
22 Company.

23 We wanted to respond to the -- my apologies.
24 Let me pull it up.

25 So we wanted to respond to Air Products'

1 comments on scope. And we don't believe those comments
2 are reason to delay utility involvement in clean fuels.

3 I wanted to point out that Air Products appears
4 to distinguish utility pipelines from the private
5 sector; however, investor-owned utilities such as
6 SoCalGas are the private sector.

7 I -- we assume that when Air Products refers to
8 the private sector needs, it means pipelines and
9 pipeline operators such as Air Products that are not
10 subject to non-discrimination requirements regulation or
11 other regulatory oversight.

12 SoCalGas is generally not opposed to evaluating
13 the role of the private sector as part of the Phase 3
14 proceeding and Track 1, B3 that plans should include,
15 quote, "Information on how low carbon fuels can be used
16 and the extent to which the infrastructure for each of
17 these fuels is part of the regulated utilities system,"
18 end quote, including consideration of the role of the
19 private sector for the gas OIR also should not impinge
20 upon or impede the progress of separate PUC proceedings
21 such as the pending hydrogen and clean fuels proposals
22 including the utilities pending GRC, hydrogen blending
23 applications, and SoCalGas's Angeles Link.

24 As the PUC has done for long-term electric
25 gas -- electric system planning, the PUC -- CPUC can

1 simultaneously develop a long-term holistic blueprint
2 for clean fuels infrastructure and the gas OAR closely
3 coordinated with electrical planning and other related
4 proceedings such as SB 380's biennial planning framework
5 while avoiding delays in the near term on CPUC action
6 where reasonable and appropriate such as general rate
7 cases and other standalone applications.

8 We also wanted to highlight California's
9 commitment to hydrogen under the ARCHES initiative.

10 California has established its commitment to
11 clean hydrogen as a cornerstone of its clean energy
12 strategy as exemplified by the ARCHES initiative.

13 This statewide endorsement underscores the
14 importance of hydrogen and achieving California's
15 ambitious climate goals. It is imperative that the CPUC
16 continues to support the integration of hydrogen into
17 the State's energy portfolio.

18 This current proceeding and its procedural
19 framework should build upon the Commission's foundation
20 and not be used to revisit debates on the State's
21 direction with hydrogen energy or on pathways already
22 laid out by the Commission such as regulating the CPUC's
23 December 2022's decision on Angeles Link and that
24 procedural pathway for subsequent action on the project.

25 We reiterate there's no need for a standalone

1 hydrogen proceeding. The CPC -- CPUC has previously
2 considered Air Products' argument for a standalone
3 hydrogen proceeding during the Angeles Link Memo Account
4 application proceeding.

5 While there is no need for a standalone
6 hydrogen proceeding, the CPUC's approval of the Angeles
7 Link Memo Account in the December 2022 decision
8 demonstrates that the Commission did not view arguments
9 about a separate proceeding as a barrier progress and
10 hydrogen.

11 The CPUC is able to make informed decisions on
12 hydrogen-related matters based on individual
13 circumstances and discrete scopes within each proceeding
14 without necessitating delays for additional specialized
15 proceedings.

16 Thank you, your Honor.

17 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Hsu.

18 I see several hands up.

19 And just want to note, if there is any party
20 that would like to object to moving back the timeline
21 for comments on the white paper to April 15th, please,
22 you know, raise your hand and state that. I don't
23 expect that, but if anyone would like to, please go
24 ahead.

25 I'll turn now to, I believe, Nora Sheriff who

1 would like to make some more comments.

2 Go ahead.

3 MS. SHERIFF: Thank you, your Honor.

4 Nora Sheriff, N-o-r-a S-h-e-r-i-f-f, for the
5 Indicated Shippers.

6 I apologize for not spelling my name when I
7 spoke previously.

8 I just wanted to briefly say that the Indicated
9 Shippers do support extending the due date for comments
10 to April 15th.

11 Thank you.

12 ALJ FOGEL: All right. Thank you very much.

13 We had also hands raised from the
14 Mr. Pendleton, Jonathan Pendleton.

15 And then I see Mr. Pederson and Gene Nelson who
16 will be next.

17 MR. PENDLETON: Thank you, your Honor.

18 John Pendleton for PG&E.

19 Just a few quick things.

20 One, we do support the extension request to
21 April 15th. That works well for PG&E.

22 Second, we agree with the categorization of
23 Phase 3 as ratesetting.

24 And, at this time, we don't see the need for
25 evidentiary hearings, but, of course, that could change

1 as the proceeding progresses.

2 The last issue I wanted to bring up is in
3 response to comments from Sierra Club, CEJA, and NRDC
4 where there was a recommendation that the Commission
5 in -- for -- kind of do away with Track 1 in terms of
6 development of the gas transition scenario analysis by
7 the utilities.

8 We -- we read Track 1 to be much broader than
9 gas demand forecasting.

10 And we -- we believe that -- that utilities and
11 other stakeholders should consider CEC forecasting
12 efforts in developing their gas transition scenarios.

13 But utilities really, we believe, know their
14 systems and their customers best and are essential to
15 developing the information that's needed for an
16 effective transition scenario.

17 So that the CEC forecasting is an extremely
18 valuable resource for this proceeding, but it -- it
19 should not be a substitute for utility input about their
20 systems and customers for that scenario development.

21 So thank you, your Honor.

22 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Pendleton.

23 I'll turn to Dr. Nelson and then Norman
24 Pederson after.

25 Please go ahead.

1 MR. NELSON: Yeah. Just two things. We
2 support the extension.

3 Also, just for the record, my name is G-e-n-e
4 N-e-l-s-o-n. I did neglect to mention that earlier.

5 And we are also strongly in favor of supporting
6 and coordinating efforts with ARCHES.

7 And we believe that Diablo Canyon could have an
8 important role to play within ARCHES.

9 Thank you.

10 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Nelson.

11 Norman Pederson?

12 MR. PEDERSON: Thank you, your Honor.

13 Yes. We support the Southwest request for an
14 extension.

15 That's it.

16 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you very much.

17 I saw Beth Kelly.

18 Please go ahead.

19 MS. KELLY: Thank you, your Honor.

20 Beth Kelly, EDF.

21 My only comment would be is if there's a delay
22 in comments on the white paper, the Commission may want
23 to consider addressing or asking the question regarding
24 what scenarios we're going to follow that would be
25 consistent with what PG&E had just said about which data

1 set -- how we're going to -- what gas data are we going
2 to use to plan?

3 And, I think, that that could be a preliminary
4 step that could keep things moving while people are
5 still getting in comments.

6 Thank you.

7 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you.

8 What you're suggesting is ask parties to add to
9 their comments on the white paper, comments on what data
10 to use for planning; is that correct?

11 MS. KELLY: You could do it that way, your
12 Honor, or you could just issue a ruling setting a date
13 for when parties would be required to identify or -- or
14 state their comments regarding which gas projections
15 should be used to set the plan.

16 ALJ FOGEL: Okay. Thank you.

17 I'm seeing a few more hands pop up.

18 And so I'd like to -- I believe we had -- I'll
19 turn to Matt Vespa first and then Seth Hilton and after
20 that Ed Lopez.

21 There may be others, but please go ahead.

22 MR. VESPA: Thank you, your Honor.

23 Matt Vespa for Sierra Club.

24 With regard to the white paper, Sierra Club
25 certainly supports the extension.

1 I did have a question on what the Commission
2 intends to do with those comments, if there would be an
3 updated version of the white paper or if it would be
4 something just for joint agency consideration?

5 That was my question on -- on -- on the impact
6 of those comments.

7 And just to respond also to PG&E's point, as --
8 as Kiki Velez from NRDC emphasized, you know, Sierra
9 Club, CEJA, and NRDC really see an urgent need to reduce
10 capital investments in the gas system and really
11 prioritizing that part of the proceeding and really see
12 Track 1 and decarbonization scenarios as a distraction
13 and pulling away from resources we need to really focus
14 on that effort.

15 And, you know, we have seen this and other
16 utilities doing this to other states.

17 Utilities are going to put forth scenarios that
18 have -- that are the interests of their shareholders.

19 I don't know what we say when we say it helps
20 our customers from our point of view.

21 Every Californian has a right to clean air, to
22 zero emission solutions, to non-polluting appliances
23 regardless of whether that is in the interest of that
24 utility's business model or not.

25 So, again, we're going to be fighting over

1 scenarios that are just going to, I think, waste
2 collective time that we should be putting to other areas
3 in the proceeding. And that -- and that's our chief
4 concern.

5 Thank you.

6 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Mr. Vespa.

7 I'll turn to -- let's see. Who did I say? I
8 believe Seth Hilton and then Ed Lopez.

9 Ed?

10 MR. HILTON: Thank you, your Honor.

11 Seth Hilton on behalf of Air Products.

12 I just wanted to very briefly respond to
13 Mr. Hsu's comments with regard to Air Products' written
14 comments on Phase 3 scope.

15 Air Products does oppose what SoCalGas seems to
16 suggest in terms of a piecemeal approach to approval of
17 hydrogen-related products.

18 Air Products believes it's important to
19 approach the role of hydrogen with regard to
20 decarbonization efforts more holistically and determine
21 the role that it will provide with regard to
22 decarbonization and including the Utility's role in the
23 development of those particular projects or resources
24 before one starts to approve individual hydrogen
25 projects that broad planning process needs to be

1 performed before so you have an understanding of what
2 projects need to be improved.

3 Thank you.

4 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you very much, Mr. Hilton.

5 Ed Lopez?

6 And if -- Mr. Nelson and Mr. Pederson, if you
7 could lower your hands, please.

8 Thank you.

9 Go ahead, Mr. Lopez.

10 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you very much, your Honor.

11 UCAN simply wishes to add its support for the new
12 deadline, April 15th, for comments on the white paper.

13 Quickly, we also concur with (indecipherable)
14 Alex Ves -- Mr. Vespa in terms of the Track 1
15 consideration, the utility scenarios. You can also
16 express the same concerns and perhaps somemore rationale
17 in its opening comments on the Draft 3 scope ruling.

18 And, I guess, your Honor, I would leave you
19 with: Is there a consideration or an opportunity
20 subsequent to today's PHC to provide a reply or
21 additional comments in the wake of our participation in
22 today's PHC?

23 Thank you, your Honor.

24 ALJ FOGEL: We'll have the white paper. We'll
25 go ahead and move the white paper comments due date back

1 to April 15th, so that is so ruled.

2 That guidance replaces the date set in the
3 March -- and -- excuse me. February 22nd, 2004 Assigned
4 Commissioner Ruling.

5 So the new due date for comments on the joint
6 agency task transition white paper is going to be
7 April 15th.

8 And, I believe, we are not planning the
9 Commission -- we -- the Commission staffs are not
10 planning any update on those -- on the white paper.

11 So, as they have indicated in the February
12 Assigned Commissioner's Ruling, the idea is to -- you
13 know, as feasible, consider those comments on the white
14 paper with regard to scoping this Phase 3.

15 That's also the place -- there will not be any
16 other opportunity for comment after -- after this
17 prehearing conference, Mr. Lopez.

18 If you wish to include comments related to this
19 scope, as we will be considering, to some extent, those
20 comments on the gas transition white paper on developing
21 the scope, you may do that.

22 And I think that's just about it.

23 If there's no other parties raising their hands
24 to make a reply, I will go ahead and end that part of
25 the agenda.

1 And, I believe, that turns -- takes us to you,
2 Commissioner Douglas, if you care to make any closing
3 comments.

4 COMMISSIONER DOUGLAS: I'll just say that I
5 appreciate the parties close review of the ACR and the
6 white paper.

7 I look forward to getting any further comments
8 and moving forward with this proceeding.

9 I think there's been a lot of recognition
10 across the board in what I'm hearing from the comments
11 today and what I've seen that these are hard issues.

12 They're important issues.

13 There's really a lot to this, and -- and that's
14 why the proposal was to put forward four tracks of work
15 or -- you know, that move forward concurrently.

16 It is a lot. It's a lot for the CPUC. It's a
17 lot for stakeholders.

18 And we do welcome your thoughts as -- as we
19 move forward, and we look forward to moving forward on
20 this important set of topics.

21 And I think that's all I've got.]

22 ALJ FOGEL: Thank you, Commissioner.

23 So, again, thank you to all the parties for
24 joining us today and providing your input, as well for
25 your comments earlier. As I mentioned, Judge Van Dyken

1 and I will be working with Commissioner Douglas to
2 develop the scope and support her issuing a scoping memo
3 for Phase 3 in the next month or two.

4 With that, we are adjourned. Thank you.

5 (At the hour of 3:00 p.m., this matter having
6 concluded, the Commission then adjourned.)]

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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDING
I, ANDREA L. ROSS, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER
NO. 7896, IN AND FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DO
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ANDREA L. ROSS
CSR NO. 7896

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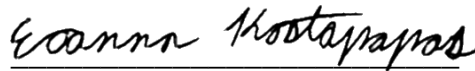
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