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CPUC Takes Further Steps To Modernize Electric Grid Through Non-Utility Owned Energy Resources

SAN FRANCISCO, August 14, 2014 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today initiated a long-term project to modernize the state's electric grid by incorporating non-utility owned energy resources into the planning and operation of the electric distribution system.

The new Rulemaking, in response to Assembly Bill 327 (Perea, 2013) will evaluate the utilities' existing and future electric distribution infrastructure and planning procedures with respect to incorporating Distributed Energy Resources into the planning and operation of their electric distribution systems. Utilities are scheduled to file with the CPUC their Distribution Resources Plan Proposals for consideration by July 1, 2015.

Said Commissioner Mike Florio, "This is one of the most important proceedings that the CPUC has launched in recent years, and the results will help to shape 'the utility of the future' in a manner that best serves the consumers of California."

Prospective changes to distribution planning processes, as contemplated in the Rulemaking, will take into account the safety of utility personnel, first responders, inspectors, installers, and end-users. This is especially important given that there will be more opportunities in the future for customers to seek interconnection of new devices and technologies to the distribution system.

"Traditional distribution system planning is limited in its ability to support State policies on distributed energy and emerging technologies," said Commissioner Michael Picker. "Through this proceeding the CPUC will guide and evaluate the distributed energy proposals of the utilities,

including considering the safety issues that arise from changes to the utility practices of distribution resource planning.”

Interested parties may file responses to the questions asked in the Rulemaking by September 5, 2014. The CPUC’s Energy Division will hold a public workshop on September 17, 2014.

The document opening the proceeding is available at

<http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M102/K036/102036703.pdf>.

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