

June 25, 2024

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS LINDSEY P. HORVATH
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LA County Resources and Support for Equitable Building Decarbonization

California has 14 million homes and 7 billion square feet of commercial space. These buildings account for approximately 25 percent of both the state and LA County’s greenhouse gas emissions. The combustion of gas for space and water heating is the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions from buildings as a category. Based on the most recent data, buildings were responsible for 1.3 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent every year in unincorporated LA County. The 2045 Climate Action Plan identified electrifying existing buildings as one of the most impactful climate action strategies, with the potential to reduce our total countywide emissions by 11%.

OurCounty: The Los Angeles Countywide Sustainability Plan highlights two decarbonization goals: (1) resilient and healthy community environments where residents thrive in place; and (2) buildings/infrastructure that support human health and resilience. In March 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved a motion, “Ensuring the Equitable Decarbonization of Buildings” which directed the Chief Sustainability Office and other departments to study, engage stakeholders, and propose policies to equitably decarbonize buildings, focused largely on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, energy costs, and air pollution in the County of Los Angeles. The recommendations of that work are expected in Summer 2024.

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While retrofits to existing buildings offer the greatest potential for emission reductions, many barriers exist, including upfront costs, split incentives between tenants and building owners, unexpected structural issues, and space constraints. Recognizing this, the Legislature resourced the California Energy Commission (CEC) with \$1 billion to solicit a direct install equitable building decarbonization program that would facilitate home electrification for low-income residents.

The goals of the CEC Equitable Building Decarbonization Program are to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in homes and advance energy equity. The direct install program will provide no-cost decarbonization retrofits to low- and moderate-income households. In addition to reducing GHG emissions, the Equitable Building Decarbonization Program (EBDP) will enhance resiliency to extreme heat, improve indoor air quality, improve energy affordability, provide electric grid support, and due to labor standards, increase payment of prevailing wage to the implementing workforce.

Recognizing the goals of the County and the State's objectives - including this significant grant opportunity due on June 28, 2024 - the County's Internal Services Department (ISD) Environmental Initiatives Division developed and led a coalition of Southern California partners known as the Southern California EBDP Coalition (SoCal Coalition). The SoCal Coalition, led by the County of Los Angeles, is applying for a \$488 million CEC EBDP grant to deliver a united regional program implemented uniquely within each community, based on local needs, goals, and partnerships.

The program model proposed by the SoCal Coalition will effectively deliver on the CEC's

goals, providing immediate environmental and economic benefits to our most vulnerable communities, while also preparing the region for the clean energy transition through capacity building efforts for CBOs and rapid development of the local workforce. The proposed design will modernize an estimated 15,000-20,000 homes, improving quality of life through improved safety, heat resiliency, and indoor air quality, while also delivering significant climate benefits in alignment with state goals.

This proposal builds on the ISD's 11 years' experience serving Southern California communities, by providing rapid deployment of solutions, technologies, and education that directly support the achievement of California's clean energy goals, including but not limited to energy efficiency and decarbonization. Programs offered over the last decade by ISD's Southern California Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN) have prioritized benefits to underserved communities. These impacts have benefitted over 75,000 households, reduced 140 gigawatt hours of electrical energy and 95,000 metric tons of CO₂-equivalent, educated more than 20,000 students, and created over 1,5000 jobs in the clean energy economy.

In addition to the program-specific activities, SoCalREN has advanced several portfolio-wide initiatives designed to support and advance decarbonization throughout Southern California for residential households, businesses, and public agencies. LA County, through SoCalREN, has become California's leader in providing direct assistance for energy efficiency and building decarbonization in private and public buildings. The County and the SoCal Coalition are uniquely qualified to lead this work, which will deliver tremendous benefit to LA County

residents, businesses, and communities.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Internal Services Department to prepare a five-signature letter in support of LA County's \$488 million grant application to the California Energy Commission's Equitable Building Decarbonization Program before the June 28th submission deadline.

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