

Public Comment from Leslie Austin for the January 17, 2024 Ava Board of Directors Meeting



January 16, 2024

Chair Marquez and Honorable Board of Directors
Ava Community Energy
1999 Harrison Street, Suite 2300
Oakland, CA 94612

Subject: Support for Ava Community Energy's Workforce & Environmental Justice Project Selection Criteria Policy (Staff Report Item 11)

Dear Chair Marquez and Honorable Directors,

On behalf of the CCA Workforce and Environmental Justice Standards Alliance, a coalition of over 40 labor, environmental, climate, and environmental justice organizations, we express our wholehearted support for the adoption of the Workforce & Environmental Justice Project Selection Criteria Policy.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the Ava Community Energy (formerly East Bay Community Energy) staff for their unwavering commitment and collaboration in developing the Workforce & Environmental Justice Project Selection Criteria Policy. We commend the openness and dedication of your staff throughout this process and believe that the demonstrated responsiveness, collaboration, and transparency should serve as a model for all future community and stakeholder engagement by CCAs across the state. This engagement process showcases how community-driven initiatives can thrive when stakeholders are actively involved.

We appreciate Finance Administrative Procurement (FAP) Committee Chair Bauters and members for their guidance in supporting this groundbreaking policy. If adopted by your board, the policy will establish a new standard for clean energy projects among Community Choice Aggregations (CCAs) in the state. Your commitment to environmental justice and workforce considerations positions Ava Community Energy as a leader among CCAs in California.

While the adoption of the Workforce & Environmental Justice Project Selection Criteria Policy is a significant achievement, we emphasize the importance of robust implementation. The success of this policy hinges on how it is translated into Request for Offer (RFO) language, the weighting of scoring criteria, proposal evaluations, and comprehensive reporting to the board during project approval and post-completion. Consistent and transparent reporting will be crucial in maintaining accountability and ensuring the policy's objectives are effectively realized.

In conclusion, we wholeheartedly support Ava Community Energy in taking this bold step towards a cleaner and more just future. Your leadership in adopting this policy will undoubtedly influence other CCAs across the state, setting a new standard for best practices in clean energy projects.

Thank you for your dedication to workers and the communities that host your clean energy projects.

Sincerely,

Endorsement list of alliance organizations follows:

Susan Penner, Co-Chair, Legislative Working Group, 1000 Grandmothers for Future Generations

Alan Weiner, Coordinator, 350 Conejo / San Fernando Valley

Transition Team, California Alliance for Community Energy

Lucas Zucker, Co-Executive Director, Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy

Ana Rosa Rizo-Centino, Network Manager, Central Coast Climate Justice Network

Lynda Marin, Chapter Lead, Citizens' Climate Lobby, Santa Cruz Chapter

Michael Chiacos, Policy Director, Community Environmental Council

Jordan Ackerman, Sr. Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Construction Trades Workforce Initiative

Ratha Lai, CEO, Critical Impact Consulting

Rita Casaverde, Executive Director, Diversity Coalition, San Luis Obispo County

Jessica Tovar, East Bay Clean Power Alliance

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John Foran, Founding Editor, Eco-Vista

Andy Carman, Director, Environteers

Leah Redwood, Action Coordinator, Extinction Rebellion San Francisco Bay Area

Tim Frank, Representative, Building and Construction Trades Council of Alameda

Bart Pantoja, Building and Construction Trades Council of San Mateo County

John Doherty, Business Manager, IBEW Local 6

Paul Guterrez, Business Manager, IBEW Local 234

Bill Baker, Business Manager, IBEW Local 413

Greg Bonato, Business Manager, IBEW Local 595

Scott Wein, Business Manager, IBEW Local 617

Mark Simonin, Business Manager, IBEW Local 639

Hector Huezo, California Director, Jobs to Move America

Veronica Wilson, CA Organizer, Labor Network for Sustainability

Leslie Austin, Director, Let's Green CA!

Jessica Tovar, Steering Committee Member, Local Clean Energy Alliance

Gopal Shanker, President, Récolte Energy

Nancy Faulstich, Executive Director, Regeneración Pajaro Valley

Sara Nelson, Executive Director, Romero Institute

Alex Lansberg, Director, Research & Advocacy, San Francisco Electrical Contractors Assoc.

Jill ZamEk, Board Member, San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace

Robert M. Gould, MD, President, San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility

Joni Eisen, Representative, San Francisco Climate Emergency Coalition

Ken Hough, Executive Director, Santa Barbara County Action Network

Pauline Seales, Educator Organizer, Santa Cruz Climate Action Network

Eric Veium, Chair and Co-Executive Director, SLO Climate Coalition

Melissa Yu, Senior Energy Campaigns Representative, Sierra Club

Timothy Duda, Directory, Terra Advocati

Woody Hastings, Fossil Fuel Phaseout Manager, The Climate Center

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Kristin Kusanovich, Founder, tUrn Climate Crisis Awareness & Action

Bijan Ashtiani-Eisemann, Organizer, UC Green New Deal Coalition

Louise Auerhahn, Director of Economic & Workforce Policy, Working Partnerships USA