



# City of Imperial Beach, California

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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November 15, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom 1303  
10th Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave.  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
Docket #: R.20-08-020

Dear Governor Newsom,

As Mayor of Imperial Beach, I am requesting your support to protect rooftop solar in California while expanding access to solar and energy storage in communities of concern. I am deeply concerned about the impacts that the climate crisis is going to have on my community who are already battling with failed infrastructure and a disproportionate pollution burden. We should be helping renters and low to moderate income communities afford rooftop solar, not changing the rules, hurting a key climate solution to support the investor-owned utility companies, which already charge my constituents one of the highest rates for energy in the country.

California has suffered the most devastating effects of the accelerating climate crisis in recent years as wildfires are becoming more devastating, droughts and flooding events are occurring more frequently and coastal erosion as well as sea level rise threaten my city and California's coastal communities. It is clear that bold policies to stop the climate crisis need to be prioritized, with a focus on building a more resilient and safe energy grid.

We need to rapidly transition off fossil fuels to renewable energy if there is any chance at a livable future. California has long been a leader in adopting solar energy with over a million Californians generating their own energy and there is one policy that is vital to that investment: net energy metering (NEM).

Net metering has allowed regional families and organizations to power their homes, apartments, businesses, cities and schools using clean solar energy by giving customers a bill credit for the excess electricity they share with their neighbors. Today, this is under attack. California's investor-owned utilities are proposing to make changes to this vital policy that would make it harder for Californians to go solar. The proposed changes would make going solar more expensive, increase the amount of time it takes to pay off systems and ultimately have the potential to eliminate the solar market in California. The current NEM policy, in addition to solar financing and solar incentives, have made adopting solar finally within reach for the residents of Imperial Beach and now the utilities have proposed changes that will again make solar adoption only feasible for the wealthy. Taking away this important solution will mean that we will continue to use more dirty energy for a longer duration, to support environmental racism and worsen air pollution across the state while expediting the climate crisis.

We must give Californians the tools they need to lower their energy bills. The state has said that we need to triple the amount of rooftop solar in order to meet the 100 percent clean energy goal. We should not be taking clean energy solutions away from people, we should be making it easier and more affordable to go solar, especially for individuals in communities of concern.

The deployment of more rooftop solar will reduce the need for new, expensive utility infrastructure, saving California ratepayers \$120 billion. Transitioning to clean energy has the potential to create 374,000 new jobs in the state all while reducing CO2 emissions.

Please, protect net energy metering and give Californians like Imperial Beach residents and businesses a chance to be a part of the solar energy revolution. Drastic changes to the NEM program by the California Public Utilities Commission will negatively impact consumers, support environmental injustices, accelerate the climate crisis and shatter California's clean energy industry. Other states look to California as a model for transitioning to clean energy and what happens here will shape the clean energy landscape across the United States. I urge you to maintain the benefits of solar energy for all Californians and invest in a stronger NEM for communities of concern.

Sincerely,



Serge Dedina  
Mayor of Imperial Beach

Cc: Members of the California Public Utilities Commission