



City of Encinitas

City Council's Office

November 19, 2021

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

Catherine S. Blakespear
Mayor

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

Tony Kranz
Deputy Mayor

Dear Governor Newsom,

As members of the Encinitas City Council, we are requesting your support to protect rooftop solar in California. We are deeply concerned about the impacts that the climate crisis is going to have on our community, which has made us leaders in developing Climate Action Plans and ordinances that focus on rapidly reducing our city's emissions and getting our city to dramatically decrease our dependence on fossil fuels. Unfortunately, despite our progressive efforts to prevent the worst impacts of the climate crisis, the California investor-owned utility companies' (IOU) proposal to reform net energy metering would set our city and the state back in our success in adopting rooftop solar.

Joe Mosca
Council Member

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 our city and California's coastal communities. Protecting policies that make it easier for homeowners, schools, businesses and nonprofits to adopt clean energy technologies need to be prioritized.

Kellie Shay Hinze
Council Member

The City of Encinitas understands the need to rapidly deploy clean energy in order to reduce the amount of dirty energy our community's use. Our Climate Action Plan has some of the most ambitious climate goals in San Diego County. We are committed to getting to 100 percent clean energy by 2030 and achieving zero carbon by 2035. We recently passed a building electrification ordinance, the first in the region, and want to see our all-electric buildings powered by local, clean energy paired with energy storage. We have long been a regional leader in adopting solar energy and there is one policy that is vital to that investment: net energy metering (NEM).

Joy Lyndes
Council Member

Pamela Antil
City Manager

Net metering has allowed 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. California's IOUs are proposing to make changes to this vital policy that would make it harder to go solar. The proposed changes would make going solar more expensive via the highest solar fees in the nation in our city, located in SDG&E's territory, which would increase the amount of time it takes to pay off systems and have the potential to eliminate the solar market in California. Taking away this important climate solution would mean that we will continue to use more dirty energy for a longer duration, worsening environmental racism from fracked gas in the state and increasing air pollution across the state while exacerbating the climate crisis.

The City of Encinitas was proud to be one of the first cities in the region to join a community choice energy program, San Diego Community Power (SDCP), and we have plans for our program to benefit the community in various ways, and net metering plays a role in our impact. The solar fees that are being proposed by the IOUs are fees that SDCP will not be able to avoid, meaning that rooftop solar for our community choice energy program customers may still be inaccessible despite SDCP's solar-friendly NEM rate, which is bad for our community members, makes it harder and more expensive for SDCP to reach 100 percent clean energy and takes away from potential program opportunities to benefit the community.

The California Energy Commission has said that we need to triple the amount of rooftop solar 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, which are often impacted by the climate crisis first and worst.

As the climate crisis worsens, Public Power Safety Shutoff and deenergization events are becoming more frequent. Local distributed energy, paired with battery storage, can help our communities become more resilient and contribute to grid stability while reducing the need for utility-scale solar projects that often require additional transmission lines that have sparked fires in our region, raising rates for ratepayers.

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 California all while reducing CO2 emissions that accelerate the climate crisis.

Please, protect net energy metering to give everyone 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, promote environmental injustices, accelerate the climate crisis, hurt cities' climate action targets 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. We urge you to maintain the benefits of solar energy for all Californians and invest in a stronger NEM for communities of concern.

Sincerely,



Catherine S. Blakespear
Mayor

CC: Members of the California Public Utilities Commission
Members of the City of Encinitas City Council