



East Bay Clean Power Alliance
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Subject: Prioritize Equity in EBCE Local Program Investments

Date: September 1, 2020

Dear EBCE Board Members,

East Bay Clean Power Alliance (EBCPA) organizations (see signatories below) and supporting members, are writing to express profound disappointment and concern that the agency is not doing more at this time to advance the racial, social and economic equity goals that motivated the East Bay community to establish EBCE and the Local Development Business Plan (LDBP) in the first place.

We appreciate the hard work of the Local Development Business Plan team in the development and launch of many programs and policies to benefit local communities. However, the most recent LDBP plan for 2020-2021 includes too few programs meant to benefit low income, people of color and other vulnerable communities—with less than 10% of the LDBP budget targeted to such programs.

In this time of heightened awareness of the true cost to Black Lives of centuries of racist policies, for EBCE to devote only 10% of the LDBP budget to policies and programs that might address the historical inequities is a glaring example of why nothing much has changed over the years. Just as the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on people of color is a glaring example of this historic inequity. Correcting economic and social disparities will take bold, purposeful actions to undo the harm.

Vulnerable communities are, but not limited to; black, indigenous, people of color, low-income, the elderly, disabled, the detained, youth, immigrants, veterans, the unhoused, women and LGBTQIA+ communities. The Alliance urges EBCE to recommit to prioritizing policies, investments, and incentive programs in the adopted Local Development Business Plan that primarily benefit most vulnerable communities.

Some examples of those programs are:

- Energy efficiency retrofit programs for low income single and multi-family homes and that utilize on-bill repayment or pay for performance mechanisms.
- Solar plus storage programs for low income multi and single-family housing that utilize on-bill repayment and include mandatory benefits and protect for renters.
- Prioritization of electrification of public transportation and heavy-duty fleets and school buses.

- Establishment of community energy resilience hubs in people of color, low income neighborhoods
- Local hiring of diverse community representation for both the East Bay Community Energy staff and in Local Development Business Plan projects and operations.

An agency that invests 90% of its local development budget into programs and policies that mainly benefit middle and upper income customers perpetuates the unequal situation that currently exists. Shouldn't resilient energy programs, for example, focus first on those most vulnerable to power shutoffs?

We understand the allure of getting \$16 million in matching electric vehicle infrastructure funds from the state. But when the total \$32 million EBCE program benefits only those able to buy and own electric cars, EBCE is deepening racial disparities not easing them.

The time for course correction in favor of community benefits is now! We call on EBCE to focus on its goals for local development priorities and invest in the communities who need it most.

EBCE cannot be held responsible for the ravages of racism that plague people of color and other vulnerable communities today. But the agency does have the opportunity and the obligation to our communities to advance energy policies and programs that are designed to reverse the effects of a long history of injustice.

As your constituents we call on you to enact EBCE program priorities that heal the energy inequities in our communities and to commit to our community's welfare.

Sincerely,

Jessica Guadalupe Tovar, East Bay Clean Power Alliance