

April 23, 2014

The Honorable Steven Bradford, Chair
Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0062



LOCAL
CLEAN
ENERGY
ALLIANCE

RE: AB 2145 – OPPOSE

Dear Assemblymember Bradford and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Local Clean Energy Alliance of the San Francisco Bay Area and the 23 organizations signed on to this letter, I would like to express our strong opposition to California Assembly Bill 2145 (AB 2145), the Monopoly Protection Bill, which would essentially reverse the Community Choice Aggregation law (AB 117) passed in 2002.

Many communities, individuals, and businesses in our region strongly support Community Choice programs as a tool to foster healthy competition, to increase the development of energy efficiency and new local renewable power resources, to achieve substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, to stimulate local economies, and to create new local living wage jobs. Community Choice programs support State energy and economic development goals, and State law should facilitate the expansion of such programs by local governments.

In the northern California service territory there has been no choice of provider for electricity consumers for over 100 years. The investor-owned utility enjoys a “natural monopoly” in its service territory.

No one ever opted in to the investor-owned utility; its customers are captive ratepayers. The opt-out structure that AB 2145 would eliminate simply levels the playing field. Without that structure, it would not be possible to establish Community Choice programs.

AB 2145 is clearly targeted by powerful special interests to undermine and eliminate Community Choice programs. AB 2145 follows in the footsteps of AB 976 in 2011/12, correctly vetoed by Governor Brown, and Proposition 16 in 2010, smartly defeated by the California electorate. AB 2145 represents a direct attack on the intent of AB 117 just as it is beginning to bear fruit in Marin and Sonoma Counties, and as many other communities throughout California are actively exploring Community Choice programs.

The Local Clean Energy Alliance therefore urges you to help the State achieve its clean energy and economic development goals by strongly opposing AB 2145.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Al Weinrub". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Al Weinrub
Coordinator, Local Clean Energy Alliance

Signatories

Oakland City Councilmember Lynette McElhaney
Clean Energy & Jobs Oakland Campaign, Oakland Climate Action Coalition
Community Choice Energy Working Group, Berkeley Climate Action Coalition
Sun Light & Power
Sierra Club, San Francisco Bay Chapter
Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club
West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project
Global Exchange
350 Bay Area
People United for a Better Life in Oakland (PUEBLO)
Kehilla Community Synagogue, Greening Committee
Energy Solidarity Cooperative
Everybody Solar
Bay Localize
Planting Justice
Alameda County Green Party
Movement Generation Justice and Ecology Project
RE-volv
Victory Garden Foundation
Rose Foundation for Communities & the Environment
New Voices Are Rising
Greywater Action
The Action Hub, Richmond

cc:

Jim Patterson, Vice Chair
Susan A. Bonilla, Member
Joan Buchanan, Member
Rocky J. Chávez, Member
Brian Dahle, Member
Paul Fong, Member
Beth Gaines, Member
Cristina Garcia, Member
Roger Hernández, Member
Brian W. Jones, Member
Kevin Mullin, Member
Bill Quirk, Member
Anthony Rendon, Member
Nancy Skinner, Member
DaVina Flemings, Principal Consultant, Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee
Daryl Thomas, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Martha Guzman, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Governor's Office

The Local Clean Energy Alliance is the Bay Area's largest clean energy coalition, with 90 affiliated member organizations, including environmental justice, social justice, environmental, business, and community groups. The Alliance sees the need for an integrated energy policy that includes both energy demand reduction and local renewable generation resources. We believe that it is through developing both these types of resources that communities can achieve their full greenhouse gas reduction and climate adaptation potential while enhancing local economies, providing clean energy jobs, strengthening community resilience, advancing social equity, and improving community health.