

CPUC WEBINAR 4/23 – GREG WIKLER’S PREPARED REMARKS (5 MINUTES)

1. Thanks Sara. First, our many thanks to the Commission for organizing today’s COVID workshop and for giving me the honor to speak today on behalf of California’s energy efficiency industry.
2. I’ll give a quick overview of the Efficiency Council and then I’ll outline the challenges we are seeing and the solutions we are actively pursuing in response to the COVID-19 crisis.
 - The Council is a member-based organization comprised of more than 60 companies and organizations that help deliver energy efficiency and demand management services to all types of energy users throughout the state of California.
 - Our members directly employ thousands of Californians leading to many thousands of additional secondary jobs through contractor and end-user training, installers, skilled engineers and technicians, marketing agents, and survey specialists.
 - We advocate at the CPUC, CEC, and CAISO, and with state legislators and the Governor’s office. The purpose of our advocacy is to push for better outcomes for our members and ultimately for the efficiency and demand management industry.
3. I wanted to take a moment to describe the impact the COVID-19 crisis has had on California’s efficiency and demand management industry ...
 - As Ed and Pat noted earlier, this pandemic has ripped through our state’s clean energy industry. With regard to energy efficiency, we have seen rapid drop-offs in activities, leading to furloughs and layoffs that are impacting a significant portion of the 320,000+ efficiency and demand management workforce.
 - We have major concerns that we are about to permanently lose our infrastructure to deliver efficiency resources, which has taken decades to build up and can’t just be restored overnight.
 - We are also worried that our ambitious carbon reduction policies are in jeopardy of not being realized as a result of the current situation.
 - Now I would like to focus the rest of my remarks on what The Council is doing on behalf of our members right now to help promote Efficiency and Demand Management resources as a key element that we think will help accelerate California’s economic recovery.
4. Our state-based advocacy efforts have taken a 2-pronged focus:
 - First, we are working with the CPUC leadership on immediate short-term solutions that will help the efficiency industry right now and immediately after shelter-in-place orders are eased. And I want to emphasize that these solutions can be realized while taking all of the safety precautions once shelter-in-place orders are eased and most importantly without asking for additional funding authorizations. Ideas we have floated include:
 - a. Relax cost-effectiveness project and portfolio thresholds requirements to TRCs of 1.0 or lower.

- b. Rescind Gross Realization Rates and Net-to-gross discounts and allow full Effective Useful Lifetimes for all retrofit measures.
 - c. Allow projects that have already been completed be validated through remote methods.
 - d. Speed up review steps for Custom and NMEC projects.
 - e. Order IOUs to immediately restore non-resource programs such as WE&T, ME&O, and various behavior-based programs including online marketplaces.
- Second, we are engaging with the CPUC and our elected leaders in Sacramento to identify longer-term solutions to some of the most pressing issues that are hampering both EE and DR resources, particularly at a time when those resources are essential ingredients for preserving jobs for many thousands of Californians and helping consumers save money during this unprecedented time of economic uncertainty.
- a. Significant reform of cost-effectiveness methods and approaches.
 - b. Align the energy efficiency goalsetting process with our state's carbon reduction policies, including SB350's doubling of efficiency by 2030.
 - c. Require that more EE and DR resources be included in wholesale market efforts, including Resource Adequacy.
5. Finally, I'll briefly mention that we are working with national groups including the Alliance to Save Energy and other organizations to advocate for clean energy-related considerations as part of a CARES-2 stimulus package being considered by Congress. We are building a coalition and are proposing a Small Business and Schools Energy Efficiency Block Grant program that would work in complement with our existing utility-based energy efficiency programs.
6. We will continue working through all of the venues that we have available to ensure that efficiency and demand management are front and center in California's efforts to bring back our economy from the terrible effects of the pandemic.
7. Thanks again to the Commission for organizing today's workshop. Sara, back to you.