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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CPUC, ENERGY COMMISSION, AND NBI ANNOUNCE MILESTONE TOWARD
ACHIEVING STATEWIDE ZERO NET ENERGY GOAL**

August 3, 2016 – The California Public Utilities Commission, California Energy Commission, and the New Buildings Institute (NBI) today announced that California continues the march toward its zero net energy (ZNE) goals, with 108 new and renovated commercial buildings that have been either verified as generating as much energy as they consume or are working toward that target.

California is the country's undisputed leader in both policies and projects that are laying the path to an energy efficient future. The California Energy Commission's 2007 Integrated Energy Policy Report and the CPUC's 2008 Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan established goals of having all new residential construction in California be ZNE by 2020 and all new commercial construction ZNE by 2030.

As announced today, the Golden State currently boasts 108 commercial ZNE buildings either verified (17) or working toward that target (91). The count was made official via the recently released [California ZNE Watchlist](#), which tracks ZNE commercial buildings, including multi-family projects. Buildings with ultra-low energy performance comparable to ZNE are also included. The Watchlist is funded via the CPUC and developed by NBI, a national nonprofit group.

With the state's bold vision of the energy future, California has steadily moved toward creating the necessary infrastructure to help design firms and owners realize ultra-low energy buildings. ZNE buildings help fight pollution and address the harmful impacts of climate change. Electricity is responsible for approximately 20 percent of California's greenhouse gas, with residential and commercial building consuming 70 percent of the electricity (equal to 14 percent of greenhouse gases).

Early adopters of ZNE buildings have also recognized the real estate and occupancy advantages of these high performance buildings which can garner higher rents and faster leasing times. For occupants, ZNE buildings offer healthy environments that reduce absenteeism and increase productivity.

"To save energy, reduce carbon emissions, and get the highest performance and value from all homes and buildings, California has set a course to achieve zero net energy in residential and commercial buildings in the next two decades," said CPUC Commissioner Carla J. Peterman, who is assigned to the CPUC's energy efficiency proceedings. "Zero net energy buildings are possible today, and as a leader in clean energy, California is well positioned to make zero net energy standard practice. We are excited to share this milestone highlighting progress toward the state's goals."

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Added Commissioner Andrew McAllister of the California Energy Commission, who is the agency's lead on energy efficiency, "The best way to create a high-performing building is to design and build it that way in the first place. The California Energy Commission recently adopted the 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards. When these go into effect in 2017, new commercial and residential buildings will have better windows, insulation, lighting, air conditioning systems, and other features that reduce energy consumption. The number of buildings on the Watchlist will only continue to grow."

Projects on the ZNE Watchlist show there is a broad range in size and locations across the state with offices and education buildings leading the count. "Zero net energy performance is a clear and tangible aspirational goal for buildings that translates directly into operational savings for building owners and represents direct action on climate change" said Ralph DiNola, CEO of New Buildings Institute. "That is why we are seeing so much activity in the education sector."

Special attention is being paid to growing momentum behind reducing energy in K-12 schools and community colleges -- both new and existing projects. With energy bills at California's K-12 public schools totaling more than \$700 million a year, innovative energy saving solutions are needed to manage costs. Schools built and renovated to ZNE performance have substantially lower energy costs and over time save money on energy bills that can be spent on students and programs.

One such project is the Oakland Unified School District La Escuelita Education Center, which opened its doors in the Fall of 2014 targeting net zero energy performance. The 123,000-square foot education complex project includes an elementary school, alternative high school, early childhood education center, the District's television station, and a community health center.

The effort to meet Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.'s ambitious ZNE goals also extends to state-owned buildings, as California has led by example by adopting an administration-wide [definition](#) for ZNE construction and building new ZNE facilities for the [Department of Motor Vehicles](#) and [State Lottery](#) with a half dozen additional facilities with ZNE potential expected to be under construction in the next year.

For more information about California's progress on ZNE, read the [ZNE WatchList](#) or sign up for the [ZNE Action Bulletin](#).

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ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

The CPUC regulates privately owned electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water, railroad, rail transit, and passenger transportation companies. The CPUC serves the public interest by protecting consumers and ensuring the provision of safe, reliable utility service and infrastructure at reasonable rates, with a commitment to environmental enhancement and a healthy California economy. For more information, please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/CaliforniaPUC, or like us on Facebook at facebook.com/CaliforniaPUC.

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

The [California Energy Commission](#) is the state's primary energy policy and planning agency. The agency was established by the California Legislature through the Warren-Alquist Act in 1974. It has seven core responsibilities: advancing state energy policy, encouraging energy efficiency, certifying thermal power plants, investing in energy innovation, developing renewable energy, transforming transportation, and preparing for energy emergencies. To learn more, visit the Commission's website at <http://energy.ca.gov/>, join us on Facebook.com/CAEnergy and follow us at twitter.com/CalEnergy.

ABOUT NBI

New Buildings Institute (NBI) is a nonprofit organization working to improve the energy performance of commercial buildings. NBI works collaboratively with commercial building market players--governments, utilities, energy efficiency advocates and building professionals--to remove barriers to energy efficiency, including promoting advanced design practices, improved technologies, public policies and programs that improve energy efficiency. Learn more at <http://www.newbuildings.org>.