



## Integrated Comfort

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Commissioner Andrew McAllister  
California Energy Commission  
1516 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Commissioner McAllister,

I am writing you in strong support of research centers such as the Western Cooling Efficiency Center (WCEC) at UC Davis, an applied research, development, and demonstrations partnership founded in large part based on CEC funding. I was proud to be the Founding Director of the WCEC, which grew out of a close collaboration between the HVAC industry (companies large and small), California's investor-owned utilities, and the California Energy Commission, to encompass a broad research, demonstration, education and training portfolio.

In semi-retirement, I am part-owner now of a small California manufacturer, Integrated Comfort, Inc. (ICI). We are affiliate members of the WCEC. We have collaborated with the WCEC on several HVAC efficiency projects. When forming the WCEC I was able to attract Walmart as an affiliate member, and they have been major supporters of, and participants in, WCEC activities. Their participation has substantially advanced the state of the art of energy-efficient and peak demand-reducing cooling technologies in California. They have specified installation of our innovative equipment on more than 50 of their stores. Both SCE and PG&E have funded research and demonstrations projects in which we have participated, including some of our Walmart stores. This industry/utility partnership has allowed us to demonstrate the dramatic efficiency gains possible using climate-appropriate systems. The data gathered by the WCEC's well-respected researchers have helped develop support for our products in California, and have also helped the state progress toward its energy efficiency goals. It would have been very difficult to make progress this rapidly under a pure solicitation model.

ICI has also participated in many of the WCEC's outreach, training, and education efforts. We have directly benefitted from WCEC expertise and from WCEC information made available to a range of industry participants on both technology development and codes and standards. WCEC demonstrations projects as well as outreach and education programs started modestly with CEC seed-funding through multi-year investments in the WCEC's mission. Many of these later secured increased funding from other organizations. They are excellent examples of how research centers can spark continuing downstream investment with increasingly valuable results.

A significant element in the WCEC's success to date results from its ability to quickly bring resources to bear on a challenge, and then either abandon it if the solution proves ineffective, or (more often) continue to pursue that solution with increased and shared project support. I continue to believe that focused research centers, acting as public/private partnerships, are essential to achieving California's efficiency targets in a timely and cost-effective manner. These partnerships can evaluate and "sort" early phase technology options more quickly and efficiently in comparison with a pure solicitation approach, and they are more likely to result in a successful path to market. Investing in the WCEC and similar research centers with flexible, multi-year funds can effectively integrate and address long-term energy efficiency issues in addition to short-term technology evaluations.

Sincerely,



Dick Bourne

Vice President