March 03, 2015

California Energy Commission
1516 9th Street
Sacramento CA 95814

Commissioner McAllister,

We are 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. The WCEC 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.

We have had a long and productive affiliation with the WCEC, and have found it a vital mechanism for promoting energy efficiency in the HVAC industry, with a strong research legitimacy grounded in the realities of the marketplace. In particular, we have seen the industry benefit from the WCEC’s focus on outreach and education, supported in part from a multi-year interagency funding arrangement with the Energy Commission. I have attended many of the WCEC’s events, both in-person and via teleconference, and have participated in, witnessed, and support its strong commitment to educating and training industry, regulators, consumers, and standards bodies on research developments in HVAC. The impartial, technologically-informed legitimacy the WCEC brings to the HVAC arena positions it ideally for implementing education and training missions that are well-suited to multi-year interagency agreements but not well serviced in competitive solicitations.

From a research perspective, the WCEC is very effective in addressing and resolving building conditioning-related inefficiencies that, if left unaddressed, will prevent California from meeting its ambitious energy efficiency goals. A significant part of the WCEC’s success has been due to its ability to quickly bring resources to bear on a challenge, and then either abandon it if a solution proves to be ineffective, or (more often) continue to pursue that solution with CEC funding or transition project support to other sponsors, such as I described above. Another example of WCEC success under center support from the CEC include its aerosol envelope sealing technology, which has since gathered both private and federal research support and is now nearing market introduction. We strongly believe that the nimbleness associated with funding research centers or programs (rather than only specific projects) are essential to achieving the state’s efficiency targets in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Investing in the WCEC and similar research centers with flexible, multi-year funds presents the opportunity to effectively integrate and address long-term energy efficiency issues that cannot be obtained through individual project solicitations in specific activity areas.

Sincerely

Richard Lord

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Carrier Corporation