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**California Center for Sustainable Communities at UCLA Comments on the February 24, 2015 CEC Workshop: Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC): Checking in on the Implementation of the First-Triennial Investment Plan**

March 4, 2015

California Energy Commission  
Attn: Commissioner Andrew McAllister  
1516 Ninth Street, MS-31  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Commissioner McAllister-

We are writing in support of the California Energy Commission to provide multi-year Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) funds for research centers such as the California Center for Sustainable Communities (CCSC) at UCLA. Centers are a wise investment of the program's limited resources and thus we support solicitations for research centers be considered for future EPIC funding cycles.

The California Center for Sustainable Communities (CCSC) is a statewide University of California collaboration, funded and supported initially by the Public Interest Energy Research Program (PIER) of the California Energy Commission. The Center is a multi-campus University of California research center that conducts work on topics important to the transition toward greater urban sustainability, bringing together the leading researchers and centers from across the State. CCSC provides research, insights, data, methods, models, case studies, tools and strategies to address energy, Greenhouse Gas reductions, land use, and transportation challenges facing California communities. The CCSC serves as a resource for policy makers, stakeholders and the residents of the state. Our mission is to assist the state's communities in the transition to greater sustainability on multiple fronts.

The CCSC at UCLA utilized funding under PIER to increase the State's knowledge as it plans the transition to decarbonized energy sources and climate resiliency. To better understand patterns of energy use, CCSC has mapped building energy consumption across Los Angeles County from 2006-2011. For the first time, stakeholders are able to make decisions to meet AB 32, SB 375, AB 1103, and other laudable State energy goals, with granular data (that protects privacy per CPUC rulings) that is linked to land use, socio-demographic, and other variables.

CCSC received start-up funds under PIER but presently has not received any funding under EPIC. CCSC at UCLA has leveraged additional funding to create an online, interactive website tool that portrays the mapping information in a tangible manner for local governments, regional and state agencies, state legislators, and other stakeholders. The website, called the Interactive Energy Atlas of Los Angeles County, will be publicly released in June 2015. The CEC PIER funding provided the start-up funds necessary for the CCSC to create this resource.

The CCSC's Energy Atlas is a platform that, in the future, allows for analysis of the cost-





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effectiveness of generation technologies, the evaluation of climate objectives, and other similar questions that local or state stakeholders may have. For instance, the Energy Atlas is a resource that can assist in the evaluation of distributed generation technologies or the identification of grid vulnerability and threats to reliability.

The CCSC's Energy Atlas is one of many projects that illustrate the need for EPIC funding for research centers. There are many benefits to research centers:

**Research centers are adept at leveraging partnerships** with other academic centers, non-governmental organizations, government agencies, and the private sector. As expressed in the public comment portion of the workshop by several others, developing these types of relationships takes time. The continued funding of research centers provides for fostering these relationships and collaboration to stimulate new and innovative technologies, policies, and plans.

**Additionally, research centers serve multiple purposes in a flexible, cost-effective manner.** They contribute to the intellectual curiosity and academic community that the University of California (UC) is world-renowned for. They are also dedicated to public service and applied research, with the goal of assisting the State in achieving its progressive energy and climate targets. These two functions (theoretical and applied) do not work at odds with one another, but rather provide an arena to further push both efforts. As you are no doubt acutely aware, research efforts require dedicated staff that has secure funding. Centers help in hiring and retaining such staff and building experienced talent.

**Further, research centers are an independent, peer-reviewed evaluation resource** distinct from the private sector and potential special interests. The State and CEC has an opportunity in the University of California for the evaluation of new technologies and the solicitation of input on future roadmaps, research, and technologies. EPIC funding should be applied to support this tremendous resource.

The CCSC at UCLA supports the use of EPIC funds to establish and maintain multi-year, multi-project research centers.

**For further information or questions regarding these comments, please contact:**

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