2026 Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) Symposium

This program is funded by California utility customers under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.

AGENDA

Tuesday, September 29: 7:45 am – 5:20 pm
California Natural Resources Agency Building, 715 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

In-person event with sessions livestreamed from the Auditorium.

Time and Session Details

7:45 – 8:30 AM

Registration and Refreshments

Registration location: Outdoor atrium along P Street; Refreshments location: 1st floor lobby

- Registration desk opens
- Refreshments and networking

8:30 – 8:50 AM

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Location: Auditorium

Symposium Welcome

- **Fritz Foo,** Supervisor of Outreach and Engagement, California Energy Commission

EPIC Introductions

- **David Hochschild**, Chair, California Energy Commission
- **John Reynolds,** President, California Public Utilities Commission

8:50 – 9:40 AM

Living Room Chat: Can Innovation Drive the U.S. Clean Energy Transition Forward?

Location: Auditorium

Description: Hear insights about how California is catalyzing the country's transition to a clean energy economy despite federal headwinds. *(CPUC Proceeding R.25-06-019, Continue Oversight of Electric Integrated Resource Planning and Procurement Processes)*

Moderator: **Michael Brune,** CEO, Clean Break Fund

Speakers:

- **Jennifer Granholm**, President and CEO, Granholm Energy, LLC
- **Lauren Sanchez,** Chair, California Air Resources Board
- **Howard Wenger**, President and Board Director, Nextpower Inc.

9:40 – 10:30 AM

Plenary Session: Advancing Innovation to Achieve California's Clean Energy and Climate Goals

Location: Auditorium

Description: Join state and energy industry leaders as they assess California's progress and uplift success stories and future opportunities after more than a decade of EPIC investments in cultivating clean energy and climate technology breakthroughs. The speakers will explore how a public interest innovation program can aid in achieving California's aggressive climate goals while lowering costs, enhancing safety and reliability, and improving equitable access to benefits for ratepayers. *(CPUC Proceedings R.21-06-017, Modernize the Electric Grid for High DERs; R.25-06-019, Continue Oversight of Electric Integrated Resource Planning and Procurement Processes)*

Moderator: **David Hochschild**, Chair, California Energy Commission

Speakers:

- **Karen Douglas,** Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission
- **Kate Gordon,** CEO, California Forward
- **Steve Powell**, President and CEO, Southern California Edison Company

10:30 – 10:50 AM

EPIC in Motion

Location: Auditorium

Description: Enjoy EPIC awardee videos that showcase how innovative clean energy solutions are improving affordability and increasing energy equity and resilience in California for electric ratepayers.

Introductory Remarks: **Le-Quyen Nguyen**, Deputy Executive Director of Energy and Climate Policy, California Public Utilities Commission

10:50 – 11:35 AM

Plenary Session: Unlocking First-of-a-Kind Technologies for At-Scale Deployment

Location: Auditorium

Description: Rapid, scaled deployment of innovative technologies will help California meet its climate and clean energy goals more quickly and at lower cost. However, even technologies that have been validated at pilot and demonstration stages often face challenges in reaching commercial-scale deployment. First-of-a-kind deployments are critical to validate long-term profitability of new innovations and enable the wider market adoption needed to make measurable impacts for electric customers. Hear from EPIC-funded companies that have proven technologies and are now pursuing first-of-a-kind commercial deployments about how project outcomes can address barriers and scale up to benefit California ratepayers. *(CPUC Proceeding R.20-08-022, Clean Energy Financing)*

Moderator: **Jon Bonanno**, Managing Partner, Factor

Speakers:

- **Eli Goldstein**, Co-Founder and CTO, SkyCool Systems Inc.
- **Ty Jagerson**, Vice President International, Antora Energy
- **Saritha Peruri**, Vice President of Commercialization, Tandem PV
- **Lyn Schlueter**, Vice President of Manufacturing, Enzinc

11:35 AM – 12:35 PM

Lunch and Networking

Location: 1st floor cafeteria, outside seating areas, and off-site eateries.

12:35 PM – 12:50 PM

Special Sneak Peek: California's New Battery Hub

Location: Auditorium

Description: Learn about the new EPIC-funded battery manufacturing pilot line facility, which will promote progress toward battery innovation commercialization and production in California, in support of EPIC Strategic Goals for Transportation Electrification, Distributed Energy Generation, and Building Decarbonization. *(CPUC Proceeding R.21-06-017, Modernize the Electric Grid for High DERs)*

Speakers:

- **Cammy Peterson**, Deputy Director of Energy Systems, Innovation, and Strategy, California Energy Commission
- **Brenna Teigler**, Co-Founder and CEO, Electrochemistry Foundry

12:50 PM – 1:35 PM

Plenary Session: Optimizing Electric Vehicles as Grid Assets

Location: Auditorium

Description: Bidirectional charging is a promising advancement that enables electric vehicles to be used as distributed energy storage resources benefitting the grid, charging during off-peak times, and discharging to power onsite loads and support the grid during peak periods. This panel will discuss how EPIC projects are helping to bring lower-cost bidirectional charging systems to the market, supporting the EPIC Strategic Goals for Distributed Energy Resources and Transportation Electrification, and demonstrating use cases that support grid reliability and resilience for electric ratepayers. *(CPUC Proceeding R.23-12-008, Transportation Electrification)*

Moderator: **Nancy Skinner**, Commissioner, California Energy Commission

Speakers:

- **Khaled Bahei-Eldin**, Director of Charging and Energy Systems, Rivian Automotive, Inc.
- **Mathias Bell**, Vice President of Market Development and Partnerships, WeaveGrid, Inc.
- **Elijah Darby**, Vehicle-to-Everything Project Owner, Pacific Gas and Electric Company
- **Nick Fiore**, Clean Transportation Innovation Manager, San Diego Gas & Electric Company

1:35 – 2:05 PM

Technology Showcase and Networking

Location: 1st floor lobby and 2nd floor

Description: Network while exploring EPIC-funded exhibits and demonstrations.

2:05 – 3:05 PM (Parallel Breakout Sessions)

Breakout Session 1.1: Closing the Battery Lifecycle Loop

Location: Auditorium

Description: In recent years, the proliferation of electric vehicles and energy storage systems in California has provided opportunities to repurpose and recycle batteries at the end of their initial practical use. The wide variety of battery chemistries and applications can offer both additional value and real challenges. Learn how EPIC-funded projects are demonstrating novel approaches to battery circularity that can support ratepayer

safety and affordability in achieving EPIC's Strategic Goal for Distributed Energy Resources. Innovations include optimizing pathways to reduce waste and creating added value, efficiencies, and cost reductions. *(CPUC Proceedings R.21-06-017, Modernize the Electric Grid for High DERs; R.22-11-013, Distributed Energy Resource Program Cost-Effectiveness Issues, Data Access and Use, and Equipment Performance Standards)*

Moderator: **Andrew McAllister**, Commissioner, California Energy Commission

Speakers:

- **Zora Chung**, CFO, ReJoule Inc.
- **Weikang Li**, Co-Founder and CEO, ExPost Technology Inc.
- **Jae Wan Park**, Founder and CEO, RePurpose Energy, Inc.
- **Steve Sloop**, Founder and President, OnTo Technology LLC
- **Antoni Tong**, Founder and CEO, Smartville, Inc.

Breakout Session 1.2: Accelerating Building Electrification Through Rapid, High-Efficiency Retrofits

Location: Conference Room 2-221 B-C

Description: Deploying highly efficient electric appliances can offer multiple benefits to Californians, such as offering bill savings, improving occupant comfort, and optimizing use of the electric grid. This panel highlights how energy efficient retrofit solutions can accelerate affordable building electrification, in support of EPIC Strategic Goals for Building Decarbonization, while also delivering important non-energy benefits such as improved indoor air quality. Speakers will explore practical strategies and emerging technologies to support ratepayers in accelerating building decarbonization by reducing installation time and costs and minimizing customer disruption. *(CPUC Proceedings R.19-01-011, Building Decarbonization; R.15-03-010, Identify DACs & Options to Increase Affordable Energy Access in the San Joaquin Valley)*

Moderator: **Margo Bonner**, Associate Director, Energy and Environmental Economics

Speakers:

- **Matt Braunwarth**, Manager of Energy Efficiency Procurement, Pacific Gas and Electric Company
- **G.G. Merkel**, Applied Research Manager, Association for Energy Affordability, Inc.
- **Alejandra Tellez**, Deputy Executive Officer and Sustainability Officer, County of Ventura
- **Brett Webster**, Principal, Carbon-Free Buildings Program, RMI

3:05 – 3:10 PM

Transition Break

3:10 – 4:10 PM (Parallel Breakout Sessions)

Breakout Session 2.1: Scaling Energy Storage for the Duration

Location: Auditorium

Description: California's transition to a carbon-free electric grid requires flexible resources capable of maintaining reliability as inverter-based renewable generation grows and fossil fuel assets retire. Long-duration energy storage (LDES) can provide this critical flexibility by delivering energy over extended periods, enabling deep renewable energy integration, reducing dependence on fossil gas peaker plants, and enhancing grid resilience during multi-hour and multi-day system stress events. Learn how EPIC has seeded investments in technologies that enable LDES scale-up in the state and beyond, supporting reliability and

EPIC's Strategic Goal targeting Distributed Energy Generation. *(CPUC Proceedings R.25-10-003, Planning, Procurement, & Resource Adequacy; R.21-06-017, Modernize the Electric Grid for High DERs)*

Moderator: **John Laird**, Senator, California State Legislature

Speakers:

- **Seamus Bannon**, Lead Product Engineer, Inlyte Energy
- **Andrew Oh**, COO, Noon Energy, Inc.
- **Matt Walz**, CCO, Invinity Energy Systems

Breakout Session 2.2: Advancing Clean Energy in California Communities

Location: Conference Room 2-221 B-C

Description: The first EPIC Challenge was released in 2016 and funded both a planning and build-out phase for community-scale projects. Project teams are now implementing first-of-a-kind, scalable models that provide affordable access to DERs alongside energy savings from zero net energy measures, improved grid reliability and resiliency, and minimal need for new infrastructure. Learnings offer pathways for replicating and scaling equitable and affordable community-level clean energy solutions, in support of EPIC Strategic Goals for Distributed Energy Generation and Building Decarbonization. Hear about the lessons learned and where we go from here. *(CPUC Proceedings R.19-01-011, Building Decarbonization; R.15-03-010, Identify DACs & Options to Increase Affordable Energy Access in the San Joaquin Valley; R.20-08-022, Clean Energy Financing)*

Moderator: **Nicole Cartwright**, Program Manager for Transformative Climate Communities, Strategic Growth Council

Speakers:

- **Ry Brennan,** Research Analyst and Consultant, Community Energy & Equity Resources
- **Genaro Bugarin**, Director of Energy Innovation, The Energy Coalition
- **Alexandra McGee**, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, MCE
- **Therese Peffer**, Associate Director, California Institute for Energy and Environment

4:10 – 4:15 PM

Transition Break

4:15 – 4:30 PM

In Conversation: Legislative Insights and How EPIC Can Advance State Policy

Location: Auditorium

Description: Join this conversation with Assemblymember Cottie Petrie-Norris. The 2026 California Legislative Session featured bills focused on key topics impacting today's energy landscape, including affordability, home electrification, climate innovation, and virtual power plants. As Chair of the Assembly Utilities & Energy Committee, the Assemblymember will share insights from this year's legislative session and discuss how EPIC can continue to advance the state's climate goals and pioneer innovation while providing cost savings, resilience, safety, and other benefits to ratepayers and the electric grid.

Speakers:

- **David Hochschild**, Chair, California Energy Commission

- **Cottie Petrie-Norris,** Assemblymember, California State Legislature

4:30 – 5:15 PM

Plenary Session: Innovating More Affordable Solutions for the Industrial Sector

Location: Auditorium

Description: Industrial facilities and sites have unique roles in the clean energy transition, often with distinct emissions and energy load profiles. While industrial decarbonization and load flexibility optimization are needed to meet state goals, the economic case can be challenging due to California's high electricity-to-gas price ratio. Learn about how EPIC is advancing breakthrough applications that are more economically feasible and deployable today to enhance benefits to ratepayers across the electricity system, in support of the EPIC Strategic Goal of Achieving Net Zero Carbon and the Coordinated Role of Gas. *(CPUC Proceedings R.20-08-022, Rates, Affordability & Protections; R.11-03-012, Utility Cost and Revenue Issues Associated with GHG Emissions)*

Moderator: **Kelly Kissock**, Faculty Director, UC Davis Energy and Efficiency Institute

Speakers:

- **Onder Caliskaner**, Founder and CEO, Caliskaner Water Technologies, Inc.
- **Robin Ihnfeldt**, Founder and CEO, General Engineering & Research, LLC
- **Parker Wells**, Co-Founder and CEO, Element 16 Technologies

5:15 – 5:20 PM

Closing Remarks

Location: Auditorium

Closing Remarks: **Jonah Steinbuck**, Director of the Energy Research and Development Division, California Energy Commission