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Renewable energy groups urge legislative action to stabilize utilities and enhance climate resilience

SACRAMENTO, Calif., June 28, 2019 — California’s wind, solar, geothermal, and bioenergy industries commend Governor Newsom and legislative leaders for introducing legislation to stabilize California’s energy markets in the wake of unprecedented wildfires and climate catastrophes. Legislative action is necessary to ensure reliability, affordability, and sustained progress toward critical renewable energy and carbon reduction requirements.

The nine trade associations represent over 28 gigawatts (GW) of utility-scale and distributed renewable energy, serving over one-third of California’s electricity portfolio. The recently introduced AB 1054, by Assembly members Chris Holden, Chad Mayes, and Autumn Burke, is designed to both stabilize and hold accountable the state’s largest utilities in the face of catastrophic climate emergencies. The bill would create a fund that provides financial stability to utilities who adhere to new safety standards and places conditions around PG&E to emerge quickly from bankruptcy while improving safety practices to avoid future wildfires. The renewable energy industry acknowledges the complex challenges that wildfire recovery, response, safety, and prevention pose to the State’s decision-makers, communities, and residents.

“California’s leaders are guiding utilities toward a safer and more resilient future. Our early leadership in renewable energy development coupled with AB 1054 will ensure stable ground for new investments in a safe, affordable, reliable, and renewable power grid,” said Danielle Osborn Mills, Director of the American Wind Energy Association of California.

Shannon Eddy of the Large-scale Solar Association (LSA) stated: “This is a pivotal moment for California. We must urgently address fire prevention and reparation, ensure we have stable utilities and rates, and mitigate the climate crisis that's predicted to spur more fires. None of this is easy. We applaud the legislature and Governor Newsom for working together to find solutions to these profound challenges.”

“Our renewable projects have brought clean energy to California attracted by forward looking policies and financially stable utilities. California’s energy future is dependent upon getting to a financially stable market, as AB 1054 intends”, said Jan Smutny-Jones of the Independent Energy Producers.

“The legislation released by the Governor and Legislature is a comprehensive effort to ensure that California maintains its clean energy leadership in a safe, innovative, and cost-effective manner,” said Sean Gallagher, Vice-President State Affairs for the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA).

In order to meet California's current renewable requirement of 60% by 2030, California will need more than 10,000 megawatts (MW) of new renewable resources by 2025. The financial stability of utilities is critical to progress on renewable energy development and construction.

To maintain a healthy investment climate for new clean technologies that will help the state achieve carbon neutrality, it is essential to uphold existing contracts with energy suppliers. The Governor and the CPUC have called on PG&E to honor its commitments to clean energy projects serving California ratepayers. Thus far, PG&E has honored these contracts. The clean energy industry expects them to follow through in the future.

Our associations pledge to work with the Governor's office, legislative leaders, and the California Public Utilities Commission as they work together to address this unprecedented set of challenges.

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The American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) is the national trade association of the U.S. wind energy industry. Members of AWEA-California include global leaders in utility-scale wind energy development, ownership, and operations who strive to direct the economic and environmental benefits of utility-scale wind energy to California. AWEA-California is unanimous in its commitment to the need for—and widespread economic benefits derived from—a diverse and balanced resource portfolio in California that reliably and affordably meets state energy demands and environmental goals.

The California Biomass Energy Association (CBEA) is a trade association representing California's biomass energy industry that combust wood waste to produce clean, renewable electricity. There are 23 biomass electric generating plants in California, producing more than 570 megawatts of baseload renewable energy and employing over 2,000 workers that help California meet its mandated GHG reductions by diverting excess wood into fuel.

The Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technologies (CEERT), founded in 1990 and based in Sacramento, is a partnership of major environmental groups and private-sector clean energy companies that promotes global warming solutions and increased reliance on clean, renewable energy sources for California and the West through its technical and policy programs that focus on key renewable energy development issues.

The California Low Carbon Fuel and Energy Coalition (CLCFE) is comprised of utility scale and distributed renewable electricity providers and associations, individual agricultural and forestry interests, as well as their trade associations; renewable natural gas providers, conservation groups and pollution control officers, and is dedicated to accelerating achievement of California's environmental and clean energy goals while enhancing the state's and regional economies and ensuring safe, reliable and affordable energy.

The California Wind Energy Association (CalWEA) is an 18-year-old trade association representing wind energy companies focused on the California market, including owners, operators and developers of projects located in California.

Formed in 1970, the Geothermal Resources Council serves as a focal point on geothermal energy for continuing professional development for its members through its outreach, information

transfer and education services. Its Policy Committee consists of nearly all the top geothermal energy developers in the United States.

IEP is a nonprofit public benefit corporation formed under the laws of the State of California to encourage the development and use of independent electric supply resources. Its members own and operate roughly 20,000 megawatts of electric generation capacity in California. IEP has been representing the interests of the developers and operators of renewable and other independent electricity supply resources before the Commission, other agencies, the Legislature, and the courts since 1982.

LSA is a non-partisan, solar advocacy association supporting utility-scale solar development through appropriate policy mechanisms. In California, LSA has helped to set the policy environment for the 10,000MW of utility-scale solar sited in the state. Member companies in the LSA are leaders in the utility-scale solar industry who share a common concern about the critical need to reduce climate emissions.

Celebrating its 44th anniversary in 2018, the Solar Energy Industries Association® is the national trade association of the U.S. solar energy industry, which now employs more than 250,000 Americans. Through advocacy and education, SEIA® is building a strong solar industry to power America. SEIA works with its 1,000 member companies to build jobs and diversity, champion the use of cost-competitive solar in America, remove market barriers and educate the public on the benefits of solar energy. Visit SEIA online at www.seia.org.

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