



April 18, 2023

The Honorable Luz Rivas, Chair  
Assembly Committee on Natural Resources  
1020 N Street, Room 164  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 914 (Friedman)—Electrical Infrastructure: California Environmental Quality Act:  
exemptions: review time period  
As Amended April 10, 2023 – SUPPORT  
Set for hearing on 4/24/23 – Assembly Committee on Natural Resources**

Dear Chair Rivas,

The Large-scale Solar Association (LSA), the California Wind Energy Association (CalWEA), the Independent Energy Producers Association (IEP) and the American Clean Power Association (ACP) write to express our support for AB 914 (Friedman), a measure that would help to expedite certain electrical infrastructure needed to support our climate and energy goals. Specifically, this measure would help to expedite the development of critical electrical infrastructure by providing a narrow environmental review exemption for a selection of energy projects that facilitate utility interconnections and infrastructure expansion designed to support transportation and building electrification and renewable energy interconnections.

California faces unprecedented need for new renewable energy and storage resources in both the near- and long-term to meet the state's climate targets and ensure system reliability. This new resource build requires new transmission infrastructure to bring the power to load centers. The California Independent System Operator (CAISO)'s 20 Year Outlook for transmission planning estimates that more than \$30 billion in new transmission capacity will be needed by 2040.

AB 914 would expedite the construction of electrical infrastructure to increase capacity, enhance reliability and update the state's electrical system to accommodate the growing energy demands that are forecasted from zero-emission vehicles, building electrification, distributed energy and energy storage projects, and greater demand for renewable energy project interconnections. This bill would also require a lead agency under CEQA to report back to the legislature should a state agency fail to meet streamlining requirements, providing a new level of accountability to the CEQA process.

To most effectively expedite needed electrical infrastructure, we respectfully request two minor amendments (attached) that: 1) specify criteria for renewable energy projects to ensure that the exemption supports projects that are further along in the planning process, and 2) increase the distance of covered projects to those that are located within 10 miles of a substation.

The status quo will not allow California to achieve the infrastructure build necessary at the pace and scale required to meet California's climate goals. It is innovative solutions, such as those proposed in AB 914, that will help us get closer to meeting our collective climate and energy targets. It is for these reasons that we respectfully urge your support of this bill. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please feel free to contact Shannon Eddy at 415-819-4285.

Sincerely,

Shannon Eddy, Executive Director  
Large-Scale Solar Association

Nancy Rader, Executive Director  
California Wind Energy Association

Jan Smutny-Jones, CEO & General Counsel  
Independent Energy Producers Association

Alex Jackson, Director, California State Affairs  
American Clean Power Association

cc: Members and Staff, Assembly Committee on Natural Resources  
The Honorable Laura Friedman

## ATTACHMENT ONE

21080.59.(a)

(2) The construction of a new electrical substation or new electrical line facilities, or the expansion, upgrade, or modification of an electrical substation or electrical line facilities, if the substation or facilities are owned by, and will be constructed by or under contract with, an electrical corporation serving not less than 10,000 customers or a local publicly owned electric utility, and if the substation or facilities will be located within ~~two~~ ten miles of either of the following:

(A) The location of an actual or forecasted electrical demand increase associated with transportation electrification or building electrification.

(B) A distributed energy project, or an energy storage project, or renewable generation source that has met all the requirements to proceed to Phase II study of the CAISO interconnection process, where the electrical line facilities or substation would support the interconnection of the project or source to the electrical grid.