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California Energy Commission

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Docket No. 12-EBP-1
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Comments of California Division of Apprenticeship Standards – AB 758

Commissioners:

The California Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the Comprehensive Energy Efficiency Program for Existing Buildings (AB 758) Scoping Report. We appreciate especially, the CEC's acknowledgement of the importance of integrating the State's workforce development policies and agencies in this dialogue and would like to express DAS's willingness and that of our workforce development partners in the State's Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) to continue this dialogue and engage with the CEC in this area.

As a number California state agencies have now recognized, meeting California's energy goals requires a skilled workforce that is prepared to quickly and safely implement new technologies and systems as they come to market. Dysfunctional labor markets and skills mismatches have proven to be barriers to the expansion of the markets for new clean technology. California has the capacity to overcome these problems, but it requires a concerted effort between the state's energy and workforce entities to engage strategically around workforce development planning. I am pleased to see progress on this front, and I applaud the CEC for its attention to workforce issues in the AB 758 Scoping Report.

DAS agrees with CEC about the scope of market needs with respect to workforce, education and training. Specifically, that key market needs include developing stackable credentials and aligning training programs; defining quality and skills standards and promoting the value of certifications in the market; and addressing skill gaps for incumbent workers. DAS has two comments to address these market needs:

- First, the DAS and other departments in the Labor and Workforce Development Agency are eager and ready to collaborate with CEC, CPUC, and IOUs' planning and investing related to workforce.
- Second, DAS would like to emphasize that the state-certified apprenticeship programs are a key resource of highly-skilled craft workers; and the DAS has already proposed to work with the IOUs to ensure that the programs are resourced and leveraged and incorporate the greatest cutting edge training possible for both apprentices and journey level workers. We welcome the CEC's participation in this partnership.

The Labor and Workforce Development Agencies have a longstanding history of collaborating with one another to coordinate their resources to deliver a product that meets both individual employer's and our economy's changing needs for skilled labor. DAS, along with our workforce development agency partners, would welcome the opportunity to expand our efforts in workforce planning to serve the needs of the energy sector as well. Bringing the state's recognized experts in the workforce development arena into the planning process for AB 758 would help ensure that the program's workforce efforts are strategic, effective, and aligned with other resources.

AB 578's workforce development efforts should build off the state's existing training infrastructure to meet the needs of the clean energy workforce. State-certified apprenticeship, in particular, is a resource

that that should be central to the clean energy workforce development agenda. As noted by the Donald Vial Center on Employment in the Green Economy, in their 2011 “Workforce, Education & Training Needs Assessment” for the CPUC, the direct job impacts of energy efficiency policy will fall heavily on the traditional construction trades.¹

DAS provides state certification of journey-level competency in each and every of these traditional construction trades and has the capacity to certify journeyman upgrades in specific industry specialties. Apprenticeship programs are also industry-driven; employers participate in curriculum design so that it matches industry demand and keeps pace with changes in technology and practice. Apprentices learn theory in the classroom that they apply on the job, and openings in training programs are directly linked to employer need.

We support the CEC’s attention to the need for workforce development in the AB 758 Scoping Report, and I would like to express DAS’s commitment to and interest in collaborating with the CEC, along with the state’s other workforce agencies, to help guide AB 758 implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Diane Ravnik
Chief

¹ Zabin et al (2011). WE&T Needs Assessment for Energy Efficiency, Distributed Generation and Demand Response. CPUC. Page 283. http://www.irlle.berkeley.edu/vial/publications/WET_Part2.pdf