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California Energy Commission
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California Energy Commission
Dockets Office, MS-4
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

Re: Docket No. 12-EPIC-01

August 17, 2012

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly), is pleased to offer these comments to the California Energy Commission on the development of the First Triennial Investment Plan for the Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) Program. As a leading polytechnic university in California, with a strong record of applied research supported by federal and state grants and contracts, Cal Poly strongly encourages CEC to invest in the development of energy- and environment-conserving technologies for the future. This will require a long-term vision and commitment to look not only at approaches with near-term benefits but also those that may not bear fruit for decades. Cal Poly faculty in science, engineering, agriculture and architecture have excellent expertise to offer in this regard and research is ongoing on the development of various alternative-energy sources (wind, algae, agricultural biomass) as well as improved energy efficiency in realms ranging from consumer products to the electric power grid. We pride ourselves on the pursuit of highly novel but practical approaches to both small- and large-scale problems.

As a member of the California State University (CSU) Council on Ocean Affairs, Science and Technology (COAST), we are especially interested in the potential for tapping into ocean sources of alternative energy. COAST provides a single point of access through which stakeholders can access the myriad resources of the entire CSU, which include not only scientists with extensive knowledge of the biology, geology and physics of California's coastal ocean, but also seven waterfront research facilities extending from San Diego to Arcata. One of these facilities, at San Luis Bay in Avila Beach, houses Cal Poly's Center for Coastal Marine Sciences and provides deep-water access directly off the pier (a former Unocal structure). Ocean monitoring at these seven CSU sites effectively provides a monitoring network for the entire coast of California. CSU marine stations have piers, docks and oceanfront property for

immediate water access, as well as vessels ranging from intermediate to large for offshore access.

A unique resource that might be leveraged for future research in alternative energy is the Morro Bay Power Plant in San Luis Obispo County, currently owned and operated at partial capacity by Dynegy. The plant is destined to be decommissioned and Dynegy has explored converting it into a research institute focused on alternative energy. The site is ideal for studying wave, tidal, wind and solar energy, and has underwater conduit to a shoreline facility already in place.

We applaud the California Public Utilities Commission's establishment of the EPIC program and the CEC's continued leadership in keeping California at the forefront of addressing the nation's energy needs. Cal Poly and the CSU welcome opportunities to assist in this critical endeavor.

Sincerely,

Susan C. Opava

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Dean