California Energy Commission
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JOE BACA
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a Congressman representing California's Inland Empire region, I am pleased to write in support of the comment letters from the University of La Verne (ULV) and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) regarding the California Energy Commission's (CEC) Electric Power Investment Charge Program (EPIC).

The comment letters from ULV and CCCCO call for the creation of an "innovation cluster" in the San Gabriel Valley and Inland Empire area, focused on developing renewable energy technologies and expanding water resources. This innovation cluster can assist in facilitating partnerships between the many universities and community colleges in our area, most of which already have cooperative programs in place. As mentioned in the ULV August 17th comment letter, ULV already oversees an "innovation cluster in the making," which involves multiple universities addressing the development of water technologies, including those relating to renewable energy development (see attached agenda for ULV's 2012 Water Conference).

The San Gabriel Valley-Inland Empire geographic area suggested for this overall water and energy technology cluster has one of the largest concentrations of universities in the state. The proposed innovation cluster will develop partnerships with local and regional governments to generate jobs and economic growth, focus on the creation of new businesses in the water and energy sectors, and help in eliminating duplicative research. It will also serve as a clearinghouse for the entire state on key water and energy funding programs and resources which can support other innovation clusters and programs.

The development of clean energy and the advancement of technology that promotes it are especially important in working towards a sustainable future for our nation. Energy is one of the largest costs associated with water supply, and there is considerable opportunity for both reduced costs and generation of core technologies which can become U.S. exports worldwide. In addition, providing safe drinking water and sanitation is critical to the residents of Southern California. The benefits of providing clean water vastly outweigh the economic cost, as there is a strong positive correlation between access to clean drinking water, sanitation services, poverty alleviation, sustainable development and general wellbeing.

The ULV and the CCCCO have demonstrated their willingness to anchor this vital innovation cluster for water-related renewable energy technology in the San Gabriel Valley and Inland Empire. As the Congressman representing California's 43rd Congressional District, I strongly support the request put forward in their comment letters. I thank the Commission for its consideration of my comments. Please do not hesitate to contact my office at 202-225-6161 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Joe Baca

JOE BACA, Congressman
43rd Congressional District