



**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY GROUP**  
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Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors  
701 Ocean Street, Room 500  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Subject: Sierra Club Supports Community Choice Aggregation for Local Public Renewable Energy**

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors -

The Sierra Club has a long history of advocating for Renewable Energy Technology and Solar Electric Technology in particular. Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is a relatively new tool for bringing renewable technologies to local communities and the Club has been very active in its promotion and related legislation especially at the State Level. We are very excited about the prospect of a local CCA initiative here in Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Monterey Counties as part of the Monterey Bay Community Power Initiative (MBCP).

CCAs are an excellent tool when properly implemented, but can fall short of their promise if not done right. We urge the Board of Supervisors to support the Initiative with the following comments and clarifications in the program:

- Renewable Energy Credits, or RECs, are a powerful tool for “selling” the green attributes of an energy portfolio. However, it is vital to our local environment that we generate and consume our own renewable energy right here in our County. RECs should be used at a minimum as part of the Initiative. We understand the desire to use them to provide start up funding, but we would encourage the County to avoid this approach. If this truly is the only way to get the program off the ground, any RECs should have a timeline to phase out
- Transmission losses account for a significant portion of losses on the electrical grid. As much as possible the CCA should build and rely on local renewable energy sources and plants. The San Rafael Airport in Marin County, part of Marin Clean Energy, is an excellent example of how to maximize local roof space to bring significant local energy production capacity online.

- Generating a larger share of our energy from renewable sources is key, but we also need to focus on reducing consumption as much as we can. The initiative should be strong on energy efficiency measures so that while we increase our capacity for renewable energy production, we are simultaneously reducing our total energy demand. New energy efficiency technologies can drastically reduce energy demands in our communities. Let's invest in our communities to ensure that we don't waste our limited resources.
- Some CCAs have come under fire for poor management and lack of transparency. Our local initiative needs to be set up to provide full transparency from the beginning to ensure that the program is providing the maximum benefit to our local community, as well as our local environment.
- 100% Public ownership. The City of Lancaster's Program is a good example of this.

We are eager to see progress in getting our local program off the ground, and hope that the Board of Supervisors will support the initiative with consideration of the points above.

Sincerely,

Greg McPheeters  
Chair, Santa Cruz Group, Sierra Club