

## Talking Points – Community Choice Energy

- **Customer Choice** - I have a lot of choices about products and services in my life and one area where I do not have a choice is electricity service. I would like to have a choice about where my electricity comes from and with Community Choice Energy, I will have that choice.
- **Local economic benefits** - Community Choice Energy makes it possible for a big part of the money we pay in our electric bills to remain circulating in the local economy. One independent audit showed an 8-fold increase in local spending after the Community Choice agency (CCA) came on the scene.
- **Job Creation** - The 2000 megawatts of power that CCAs have built, and other aspects of their activities, has resulted in CCAs being responsible for the creation of over 4,000 jobs in California, with much more on the way.
- **Local Control** - Currently decisions about our energy sources and electricity are made in distant boardrooms of PG&E and regulatory proceedings at the California Public Utilities Commission. Community Choice brings much of this decision-making into local control.
- **CCA Funding** - Community Choice energy is not taxpayer funded, it operates on an existing revenue stream in the tens of millions of dollars that is directed into local control. Once operational, start-up costs can rapidly be re-paid.
- **Clean Energy** - On average, the 19 operational Community Choice agencies provide greater than 50% California-defined renewable energy in their power mixes. CCAs are leading the way on achieving the state's clean energy goals. To date over 2000 megawatts of new renewable power (that is more than two nuclear power plants' worth), has been built in California, with another 1000 expected for 2019.
- **Central Valley Energy Survey** - In 2016 a survey was carried out by a professional pollster, asking Valley voters about energy issues. The poll found that two-thirds or more of voters want a choice about their electricity service, want reinvestment of their electricity dollars in the local economy, care about having cleaner energy.
- **Resilience** - Community Choice agencies are working with their delivery utilities and other agencies to help lead the way to a more resilient electricity system in the face of increased wildfire and other challenges. An Advanced Energy Rebuild program spearheaded by a CCA in the wildfire area in Sonoma County is offering big incentives to homeowners who lost their homes to rebuild more resilient and efficient homes.
- **Electrification of transportation** - Many CCAs are initiating programs to help customers, including low income customers, to afford leasing or purchasing an EV. Other programs are expanding charging infrastructure, and one is working with a bus manufacturer and rates and charging systems that help them save money.
- **Energy Democracy** - CCAs are not-for-profit local programs where decision-making meetings are open to the public. This opportunity for public participation helps to democratize the energy

sector by empowering community members to weigh in on energy-related decisions that affect their lives.

- **Environmental Justice** - Being local not-for-profit agencies led by accountable elected officials, CCAs are far more receptive to the needs of the communities they serve. EJ communities have a new opportunity to engage on an issue that has historically been very difficult to penetrate.
- **Competitive rates** - Since the first one became operational in 2010, CCAs have been offering their customers cleaner power at competitive and often lower rates as compared to the big utility. CCAs are committed to keeping their rates competitive and when possible lower than the utility, as they operate in the interest of their customers, not shareholder dividends.
- **No loss of existing programs** - One thing I like about Community Choice energy is the fact that all of the programs such as the low income CARE program, medical baseline, and energy efficiency programs, don't go away. They are all paid for on the delivery side of the bill and that does not change with CCA.
- **Air Quality** - in the long run, a shift to cleaner renewable energy will bring improved air quality as fossil gas plants can be retired; in the near term, CCAs are helping to advance the electrification of transportation, thereby reducing tailpipe emissions.
- **Competition** - A phenomenon has occurred as Community Choice has emerged, which is that the big for-profit utilities now have competition, and so they are beginning to try to compete, and the result is that they are now offering their own 100% renewable option, and their own solar option where customers can help pay for a large solar installation in the utility service territory.
- **Private Sector Opportunity** - CCAs create a huge new opportunity for project developers and other energy sector players to engage with these new agencies that have much greater interest in mid-scale size projects than the big utilities. Non-energy related businesses of any kind have a new choice about their electricity and a new service provider with whom they may collaborate on energy saving projects and programs.
- **Energy Localization** - A worldwide transition is underway, away from the 100 year old system of big generating plants and long distance transmission, to a more localized, decentralized system of local energy resources. Not just generation, but efficiency, storage, automation, electric vehicles, and more. CCAs being local agencies are positioned well to play a key role in this transition. This energy localization is where communities stand to benefit with jobs and other economic benefits.
- **Elected leaders: please study Community Choice Energy seriously** - Community Choice energy is a complex topic and a technical study is needed to be able to make an informed decision as to whether or not a Community Choice agency is right for [community]. Please hold a study session where an in-depth presentation can be made and where your good questions can be asked, in order to be able to decide whether to allocate some money to have a consultant prepare a Technical Study.