

MEMORANDUM

Subject: LIOB Staff

12/8/16

History

The Low Income Oversight Board (LIOB) was established by Senate Bill 2 from the Second Extraordinary Session (SBX2 2) to advise the CPUC on low-income electric and gas customers' issues and represent the interests of low-income ratepayers to the commission. Since its creation, the responsibilities of the LIOB have been expanded to include oversight of water utility issues and the Universal Lifeline Telephone Service. The California Public Utilities Code Section (§) 382.1.(f)(3) states that all *reasonable costs incurred by the board in carrying out its duties including staffing, travel, and administrative costs, shall be reimbursed through the public utilities reimbursement account.*

Background

The key function of the LIOB is to oversee the implementation of programs created to assist low-income ratepayers, provide assistance in the development and analysis of low-income ratepayers needs, and report to the legislature upon request (CPUC Code Section (§) 382.1.). Unfortunately, the lack of a dedicated full-time staff greatly limits the ability of the board to effectively fulfill its statutory obligation. In order to oversee utility programs and also respond to ratepayer, utility and ESA contractor concerns, the LIOB requires **two full time staff members** to complete all activities related to its statutory obligation of advising the commission on low-income ratepayer needs.

Positions

Senior Analyst

- In Depth Reporting- Responsible for synthesizing vital information into program reports that will assist the board in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of all programs provided to low-income electricity, gas, and water customers. The reports and research conducted by the analyst will include geographic analyses of outcomes, penetration rates and legislative updates relevant to the LIOB's statutory obligation.
- LINA – Assist in the development and analysis of assessments of low-income customer needs as mandated by AB 32. This includes the planning process of any such assessment and making recommendations to the board for data collection.
- Organize meetings - Schedule board meetings, prepare minutes and arrange speakers.

- Weekly Digest - Create weekly digests of all official communications and reports.

Community Outreach Specialist

- Liaison with stakeholders - Primary responsibility will be to serve as a liaison and develop relationships with key stakeholders within the CPUC, utilities, ESA contractors and disadvantaged communities.
 - This position is particularly important for ESA contractors, many of whom left the industry because of the continuance of bridge funding, something which could have been potentially avoided had this position existed and the LIOB been alerted.
- Streamline enrollment – Coordinate with state and county stakeholders to streamline the application and enrollment process of programs for low-income electricity and gas customers with general low-income programs, including, but not limited to, the Universal Lifeline Telephone Service (ULTS) program and, including compliance with Section 739.1, and where possible social service and school lunch programs.
- Communicate with other utilities - Communicate and collaborate with utilities not represented on the board to ensure all stakeholders have the opportunity to voice their concerns and provide feedback.
- Administrative tasks - Responsible for administrative tasks such as handling calls, returning messages and responding to general queries.

Justification and Consequences of Status Quo

- Unique Opportunity – Decision 16-11-022 made by the CPUC eliminated the go back rule, the modified three measure minimum and individual measure caps to grant IOUs the unique opportunity to substantially enhance the services they provide to low-income ratepayers. The LIOB is obligated to oversee that the implementation of the new provisions adopted in this historic decision by the commission effectively helps low income ratepayers.
- No Public Point of Contact – There is no designated point of contact within the CPUC to handle low income ratepayer issues. The LIOB website currently lists the gainful employment contact information of its board members. To date, several ESA and state contractors have contacted members of the board directly to share their concerns regarding state programs. Unfortunately, this is not the primary function of the board. It is the responsibility of staff to handle such communications and then inform the board of relevant concerns.
- Minimal Analyses – Board members currently receive monthly and quarterly reports through the CPUC mailing list. Unfortunately, these reports do not contain any granular

analysis that informs the board on specific regions and communities within each IOU area.

- Low-Income Program Penetration Rates – CARE and ESA penetration rates remain short of their potential, with the LIOB limited in its capacity to evaluate the program because of the lack of resources and information.
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