



California Public Utilities Commission

Legislative Bill Update – Office of Governmental Affairs

*Bills of Interest to the Low-Income Oversight Board
Meeting – Thursday March 24th, 2022*

On Friday February 18, both houses of the Legislature had their bill introduction deadlines. Several bills of interest to the Low-Income Oversight Board (LIOB) are active and are summarized below:

1. Assembly Bill 2316 (Ward) - Community Renewable Energy Program

This bill would require the CPUC to establish the Community Renewable Energy Program for customers of an electric investor-owned utility to subscribe to and receive bill credits from electricity generated by a community renewable energy facility. The bill would require the CPUC to establish program implementation requirements by October 1, 2023. The bill would require the CPUC to establish financial incentives for community renewable energy facilities that have low-income customer subscribers, subscribers in disadvantaged communities, or low-income service organization subscribers.

Status: *In Assembly Energy & Utilities Committee pending bill hearing.*

2. Assembly Bill 2419 (Bryan) - Environmental justice: federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

This bill would require a minimum of 40% of funds received by the state under the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to be allocated to projects that provide direct benefits to disadvantaged communities and a minimum of an additional 10% be allocated for projects that provide direct benefits to low-income households and low-income communities. The bill would establish the Justice40 Oversight Committee in the Office of Planning and Research to perform various actions related to the expenditure of those federal funds. The bill would require the committee, by December 31, 2024, to provide an interim report, and by December 31, 2027, to provide a final report on the expenditure of the federal funds

Status: *In Assembly Natural Resources / Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials committees pending bill hearing.*

3. Assembly Bill 2750 (Bonta) - Department of Technology: digital equity plan

This bill would require the Department of Technology (CDT), in consultation with the public, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), and the California Broadband Council, to develop a state digital equity plan. The bill would require that the plan include the identification of barriers to digital equity faced by specified populations and measurable objectives towards achieving digital equity among those populations. The bill would require CDT to seek all available federal funding (presumably this is referencing Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding) for purposes of developing and implementing the plan.

Status: Introduced, pending committee referral.

4. Assembly Bill 2751 (E. Garcia) - Affordable Internet and Net Equality Act of 2022

This bill would make various substantive changes to state law to incentivize providers to provide affordable internet. Specifically, it would: set a statewide broadband adoption goal, leverage state contracting authority by requiring any internet service provider (ISP) that contracts with the state to offer affordable plans to the general population, set standards for affordable plans, including eligibility requirements and price caps, require ISPs doing business with the state to participate in the Lifeline program and Affordable Connectivity Program and require IT vendors doing business with the state to contribute to a Digital Literacy and Adoption Fund.

Status: Introduced, pending committee referral.

5. Senate Bill 1188 (Laird) - Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund: financial assistance

This bill would authorize the State Water Resources Control Board to provide reduced or 0% financing to further the purposes of the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Law of 1997. The bill would remove the requirement that a water system serve a severely disadvantaged community in order to be provided with up to 100% grant funding or principal forgiveness and instead authorize providing that grant funding or principal forgiveness to certain other water systems.

Status: In Senate Environmental Quality committee pending hearing.

6. Senate Bill 1208 (Hueso) - Public Utilities Commission: commission-approved low-income customer assistance programs: universal application process

This bill would require the CPUC, by June 30, 2023, to develop a universal application process to enable a customer to concurrently apply for multiple CPUC-approved low-income utility customer assistance programs.

Status: Introduced, amended, and pending committee referral.

7. Senate Bill 1213 (Hueso) - Public Utilities Commission and State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission: public outreach: community-based organizations

This bill would require the CPUC and California Energy Commission (CEC) to collaborate to develop and maintain a list of community-based organizations to help ensure adequate public outreach regarding available programs and incentives. The bill also would require the CPUC and CEC to work with existing committees, boards, and community-based organizations in developing the list.

Status: Introduced, amended, and pending committee referral.