



California Public Utilities Commission

Legislative Bill Update – Office of Governmental Affairs

*Bills of Interest to the Low-Income Oversight Board: Legislative Subcommittee
Meeting – Wednesday May 10th, 2023*

The deadline for the Senate and Assembly policy committees to hear and report on introduced bills was Friday, April 28th. The deadline for the Senate and Assembly appropriations committees to hear and report on introduced bills is Friday, May 19th. Several bills of interest to the Low-Income Oversight Board (LIOB) are active and summarized below:

1. Assembly Bill 982 (Villapudua) - Public Utilities Public Purpose Programs Fund.

This bill would establish the Public Utilities Public Purpose Programs Fund, and would, upon appropriation, require the CPUC to allocate the moneys in the fund for purposes of funding programs funded through an electrical investor-owned utilities' (IOU) public purpose program rate component as of December 31, 2023, and other programs determined by the CPUC to provide public benefits, except the Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) program and the California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) program.

Status: *Referred to Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.*

2. Assembly Bill 1231 (Santiago) – Telecommunications: combining lifeline, federal lifeline, and federal Affordable Connectivity Program subsidies.

This bill would require the CPUC to allow every wireline and wireless lifeline telephone service subscriber to combine lifeline subsidies with federal lifeline subsidies and federal Affordable Connectivity Program subsidies. The bill would prohibit the CPUC from disallowing payment to a telephone corporation providing lifeline telephone service based on the combination of those subsidies.

Status: *Referred to Assembly Committee on Appropriations.*

3. Senate Bill 355 (Eggman) - Multifamily Affordable Housing Solar Roofs Program.

The bill would expand specified requirements in the Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) Program to, among other things, include properties in which at least 66% of the households have incomes at or below 80% of the area median income, properties owned by a tribe, as defined, and rental housing properties owned by public housing agencies or authorities. The bill would extend the requirement that the CPUC award monetary incentives for those solar energy systems through December 31, 2032. If those multifamily residential properties are new construction, the bill would prohibit using moneys authorized through the program to meet specified regulatory requirements.

Existing law requires that low-income tenants who participate in the program receive credits on utility bills from the program. This bill would limit the applicability of that requirement to units that are separately metered.

Status: Referred to Senate Committee on Appropriations. Set for hearing on May 15th.

4. Senate Bill 823 (Smallwood-Cuevas) - Electrical corporations: Discounted Electric Vehicle Charging Payment Card Competitive Grant Program.

This bill would, upon appropriation by the Legislature, require the CEC in consultation with the CPUC, CARB, and the California Integrated Travel Project, establish a competitive grant program to award moneys for projects that provide an eligible resident, as described, with a payment card that may be used at any publicly available electric vehicle charging station, as specified. The bill would require the CEC to prioritize projects with the greatest potential to provide payment cards to individuals enrolled in a low-income residential customer electrical rate assistance program and to establish criteria for awarding a grant pursuant to the program, as specified. The bill would authorize the CEC to select an administrator to oversee the program and to adopt, and revise, guidelines or other standards for the program. The bill would require the CEC, within 15 months after the program is established, and annually thereafter, to prepare and submit to the Governor and Legislature a report that includes specified information relating to the program.

Status: Referred to Senate Committee on Appropriations Set for hearing on May 15th.

5. Senate Bill 851 (Stern) - Self-generation incentive program.

Existing law requires the CPUC to administer, until January 1, 2026, a self-generation incentive program (SGIP) to increase the deployment of distributed generation resources and energy storage systems. Existing law requires CPUC to use funds that are appropriated by the Legislature, as provided, for the purpose of providing incentives to eligible residential customers who install behind-the-meter energy storage systems or solar photovoltaic systems paired with energy storage systems. Existing law requires the CPUC to allocate 70% of that funding for incentives to eligible low-income residential customers who install either new behind-the-meter solar photovoltaic systems paired with energy storage systems or new energy storage systems.

This bill instead would require, among other things, that the incentives described above for eligible residential customers be used in addition to the SGIP. The bill would require the CPUC to establish a system to equitably award incentives to support adoption of commercially available behind-the-meter solar photovoltaic systems and energy storage systems by eligible residential customers. The bill would also require the CPUC to establish a block grant structure and associated guidelines for entities with demonstrated success in providing service to low-income populations in the state.

Status: Referred to Senate Committee on Appropriations. Set for hearing May 15th.