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March 6, 2017

The Honorable Mary Adams, Board Chair
and Monterey County Board of Supervisors
County of Monterey – Administrative Offices
168 W. Alisal Street
Salinas, CA 93901

Re: Item 31. Community Choice Aggregation Program

Dear Chair Adams and Monterey County Supervisors:

The Government Affairs Committee (GAC) of the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce (MPCC) received a presentation on the Monterey Bay Community Power (MBCP) initiative by a representative for Santa Cruz County Supervisor Bruce McPherson in June of 2016. Because we had unanswered concerns, we chose to monitor the development of the Tri-County community choice energy initiative, known as Monterey Bay Community Power (MBCP), before taking a position.

The GAC met on February 27, 2017 and made the following recommendation—to be voted on by the MPCC Board of Directors on March 22—to submit letters to relevant jurisdictions stating the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce is supportive of renewable energy at reasonable rates but wants a governance structure for the joint powers authority (JPA) governance structure as recommended by the Monterey County Board of Supervisors on February 14, 2017 that is more fair and equitable than initially proposed. We prefer the Supervisors' model because it's weighted vote is more balanced for our communities than what is currently proposed.

However, we recently learned because four (4) communities have already joined MBCP, there is no option to revise the governance model. The result is a take-it-or-leave-it situation, which creates underrepresentation for Monterey County ratepayers and a tough decision for many elected officials.

We are disappointed at the poor public outreach to Monterey County and the County cities. The governance model should have been thoroughly communicated and vetted with top decision makers before it was too late to revise. Because of the rush to finalize the JPA, there is zero flexibility now. The response to many of our early questions was – we will work everything out once the JPA is formed. No one ever returned to update us with the answers. This is an example where the agency staff and municipal representatives didn't know to question the model.

We applaud the Monterey County Board of Supervisors for doing its due diligence in trying to negotiate better JPA representation for our region. We understand you may ultimately vote to join the MBCP-JPA, despite the current governance model; and, we would support you in your decision to do so, recognizing the ability to enhance alternative energy choice with competitive rates and the economies of a larger JPA.

Sincerely,

Jody Hansen
President and CEO