



March 6, 2017

Monterey County Board of Supervisors  
PO Box 1728  
Salinas CA 93902

**Re: Item #31 for March 7, 2017 Meeting - Ordinance Authorizing Implementation of Community Choice Aggregation Program in County of Monterey**

Dear Supervisors,

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce comprises about 650 member organizations, representing thousands of local employees and citizens, we remain concerned about the long-term policy implications for Salinas Valley businesses if the County of Monterey joins Monterey Bay Community Power, a three-county community choice aggregation joint powers agency.

On July 26, 2016, the Chamber's Government Relations Committee heard a presentation by a Santa Cruz County-based "ambassador" of Monterey Bay Community Power. Since then we have continued to monitor developments in the campaign to establish this agency and transfer electric customers from Pacific Gas & Electric to publicly-owned electrical power generation. We have also heard positive and encouraging arguments from a representative of the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority who is active on our Government Relations Committee.

This proposed agency would seem to offer numerous benefits if governed wisely. Yet we remain concerned about the lack of balance in discussions about it. Possible negative impacts of this new government agency are downplayed. We understand that state law restricts PG&E from providing an opposing viewpoint. Numerous organizations are lobbying for this agency, some with agendas that may be considered unfriendly to free enterprise and small businesses. Santa Cruz-based interests are dominant behind the scenes in pushing it, and these interests may not align with Salinas Valley interests.

We urge you to resist the significant pressure to join now with the promise that all the policy issues will be worked out later to your satisfaction. Please push for a governance structure that allows for adequate and appropriate representation of Monterey County and the City of Salinas. Publicly declare your intentions for this agency concerning Project Labor Agreements, alternative procurement practices that circumvent competitive bidding, and openness to public-private partnerships for electricity generation. The public needs to be aware of how this agency will manage its ratepayer revenue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul J. Farmer".

**Paul J. Farmer**

President & CEO, Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Phone (831) 751-7725 [www.SalinasChamber.com](http://www.SalinasChamber.com)