

Katherine Douglas

Public Comment

4



From: Michael Chiacos <mchiacos@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 2, 2025 8:55 PM
To: sbcob
Cc: Sigrid Wright
Subject: CEC support for Agenda Item 4, Renewable Energy Project
Attachments: County of SB Renewable Energy Project - CEC support (1).pdf

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Clerk of the Board,

Please confirm receipt of the attached letter from Community Environmental Council, describing our support for agenda item 4, the County of Santa Barbara Renewable Energy Project.

Thank you,

Michael Chiacos
Senior Policy Consultant
Community Environmental Council

March 3rd, 2025

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Agenda Item 4, Countywide Renewable Energy Project Decision

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

The Community Environmental Council is very pleased to see this proposal to solarize eight large County of Santa Barbara facilities, and strongly supports the staff recommendation of option #2 to move forward with Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) for all sites. CEC applauds the excellent work of General Services in developing the project and the foresight of the Energy Manager to apply for NEM 2.0 tariffs at most of the largest sites.

For over a decade, CEC has been advocating for local governments and organizations with portfolios of properties, such as the County of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara USD, local cities, and others to consider PPAs as a way to rapidly move forward on solar projects. Our Solarize Nonprofit program has helped 10 local nonprofits benefit from solar using a turnkey PPA. While the County of Santa Barbara has made modest progress toward self-financing solar projects since the Net Zero Resolution was passed in 2014, PPAs are an opportunity to finish solarizing the bulk of large county sites in the next year.

Time is of the essence with the NEM 2.0 deadline approaching in April 2026. The staff presentation notes avoided cost savings of \$23 million by utilizing PPAs for the eight sites, as well as the opportunity to purchase the projects after 20 years or at any time should funding become available. Many of these sites may add battery storage to their solar arrays, which will provide additional resilience benefits at critical County facilities and allow savings and emission reductions from avoided use of generators.

CEC urges the County of Santa Barbara to move forward with PPAs at all eight sites as quickly as possible, to make sure projects are energized before the April 2026 NEM 2.0 deadline.

Sincerely,

Sigrid Wright
CEO/Executive Director

Michael Chiacos
Senior Policy Consultant