

Homestead Valley Community Council

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May 11, 2009

Neil Derry, Supervisor 3rd District
County of San Bernardino
385 N. Arrowhead Ave.
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0110

Dear Supervisor Neil Derry:

In July 2008 Governor Schwarzenegger signed California Assembly Bill AB811 into law. This legislation now makes it possible for City and County governments to provide low interest loans to home and business owners within their jurisdictions, for the installation of energy efficiency improvements and distributed generation. These funds are paid back through the regular property tax collection system.

Programs like AB811 have shown to be the cleanest, fastest, and lowest cost means for governing bodies like the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors to bring their jurisdictions into compliance with AB32 clean air standards. The board could fund these loan programs in many ways, including federal stimulus funds for energy efficiency improvements, sales of improvement or redevelopment bonds, or private investments by banks and other interested investors. This program is extremely flexible. The loans become first liens to the involved property, making them low interest, low risk, and very attractive to both the recipients and to those funding the program. San Bernardino can recover any administrative costs through part of the interest payments.

In November of 2008, The City of Palm Desert was the first municipality to fund AB 811 loans for home and business owner energy efficiency improvements to their properties. Since then, Palm Desert has allotted over 10 million dollars to this program. Those who received loans for point of use renewable energy generation had solar panels installed by February 2009. Compare this to the years of application review process for utility scale remote generation proposals and the intrusive transmission lines like Green Path North that will be required to transport that energy. Cities and Counties all over California are currently working to emulate The City of Palm Desert's AB811 success and initiate similar programs.

The rural communities of Homestead Valley are entirely unincorporated. The County of San Bernardino is the best resource for our residents and business owners to get access to AB 811 loan programs. Funding for this legislation by San Bernardino County will provide a win/win solution to this region's energy consumption concerns, and send a message to utilities like Los Angeles Department of Water and Power that locally generated and distributed renewable energy with simultaneous widespread energy efficiency improvements are the best solutions for AB32 compliance and Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) goals.

HVCC commends you for leading by example and participating in distributed renewable energy generation with your own rooftop PV system. We are now asking you to continue that leadership by promoting AB811 program funding for San Bernardino County residents, and by educating the other supervisors on the potential benefits to the County and to their constituents if this program becomes available to them. Please contact us if you feel we may be of assistance to you in this endeavor.

Respectfully submitted,



Rick Sayers

President, Homestead Valley Community Council