March 21, 2023

The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman

1021 O Street, Suite 8530

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 355 – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Eggman,

The undersigned organizations are pleased to support SB 355, your bill which expands eligibility for the Solar On Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) program

This program, championed by you in AB 693 (Chapter 582, 2015), has leveraged over 35 million dollars and helped over 70 affordable housing developments install solar, benefitting low-income tenants.[[1]](#footnote-1) SB 355 allows more low-income households to take advantage of solar by broadening the eligibility of the program.

Work from the California Housing Partnership shows that affordable housing providers want to install solar panels on properties, but, often, financial implications make it difficult for installation.[[2]](#footnote-2) The SOMAH program has been instrumental in providing funding so that solar installations become financially feasible and that tenants benefit.

SB 355 allows more affordable housing developments to participate in the SOMAH program so that low-income households are not forgotten as California moves towards electrification. Currently only existing, individually-metered buildings are eligible for SOMAH. SB 355 permits new construction and certain master-metered properties for extremely low-income households to apply for SOMAH. It also aligns the income restrictions to HUD programs for easier leveraging and ensures properties near disadvantaged communities, in Indian Country, and considered public housing can apply. Lastly, it extends the program for four years, until 2034.

It is critical to reach low-income households for California to achieve its climate goals. This bill is an important measure to reach them because it helps affordable housing providers access funds for solar installation.

Thank you,

1. [SOMAH Semi-Annual Report](https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/energy-division/documents/somah/somah-semi-annual-report-pa/pa_2023-january_somah-semiannual-progress-report.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Affordable Housing Decarbonization Summit Report 2022](https://chpc.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/AffordableHousingDecarbSummitII_Report2022.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)