

County of Santa Clara

Office of the County Executive

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March 26, 2024

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Office of Air and Radiation
Climate Pollution Reduction Grant
Washington, DC 20460

**Re: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program:
Implementation Grant Letter of Support - EPA-R-OAR-CPRGI-23-07 for the Bay Area
Clean Homes Initiative**

Dear US EPA Office of Air and Radiation,

In my role as the County Executive, I serve as the representative of the County of Santa Clara that is a member of both the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and the Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN), a partnership that serves the nine San Francisco Bay Area counties. We commend the EPA for its creation of the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program, which will drive transformative work and significant near-term greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions through 2030 as well as provide a pathway to scale home electrification in low-income disadvantaged communities over the long term.

The County of Santa Clara supports ABAG's proposed Bay Area Clean Homes Initiative (BACHI) that would directly benefit low-income and disadvantaged community (LIDAC) households, as defined by EPA's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), across the region. Santa Clara County has more single-family homes in CEJST communities than any other Bay Area county. The County of Santa Clara is committed to eliminating disparities and environmental injustices experienced by historically marginalized communities and ensuring that those communities can access the benefits of energy efficiency and electrification. BACHI seeks to deliver services complementary to those offered through BayREN's multifamily and single-family programs; we believe both efforts are vital and necessary to help rapidly decrease GHG emissions and support community decarbonization as a solution to rid our reliance on fossil fuels.

Letter to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Re: Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program
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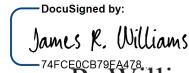
The proposed BACHI program design aligns with the County of Santa Clara Sustainability Master Plan goals to reduce GHG emissions in the community and improve the health and well-being of vulnerable residents. BACHI will further these goals in collaboration with local partners, such as other local governments, Habitat for Humanity, Rebuilding Together, community-based organizations and Community Choice Aggregation agencies. BACHI will increase regional outreach and strategy development to support the shift to building decarbonization in existing buildings, particularly in multifamily and single-family homes.

The County of Santa Clara supports the design and intent of the proposed Initiative and, should the proposal be successful, will actively participate in the delivery of program services to BayREN customers as a BACHI partner. The County will conduct neighborhood-scale engagement to recruit projects into the BACHI pipeline. With coordination support from ABAG, the County will lead on-the-ground engagement of neighborhoods within our jurisdiction, conduct marketing, education, and outreach efforts, pilot neighborhood approaches, and provide ongoing program input to ensure BACHI continues to meet the needs of our local community. This aligns with the role described for BayREN county members in the BACHI proposal's task on advancing neighborhood decarbonization.

The BACHI will deliver a streamlined region-wide program, presenting offerings that, while unified in approach, will be tailored to each community based on local needs, local goals, and complementary local services. We feel confident that the unique BACHI delivery model will expeditiously expand access to residential decarbonization for households disproportionately impacted by pollution, burdened by high energy costs, and historically excluded from clean energy opportunities.

The County of Santa Clara looks forward to participating in this historic effort to drive direct, household-level climate action, economic relief for LIDAC households, and transformative solutions that will deliver significant near-term GHG reductions while positioning the Bay Area region to decarbonize our communities successfully and equitably.

Sincerely,

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James R. Williams, County Executive