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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

County Administrative Office
Governmental & Legislative Affairs

September 13, 2021

The Honorable Paul Gosar
U.S. House of Representatives
2057 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 2051

RE: H.R. 3330 - Public Land Renewable Energy Development Act of 2021

Dear Congressman Gosar,

On behalf of San Bernardino County, I write in support of H.R. 3330, the Public Land Renewable Energy Development Act of 2021 (PLREDA). San Bernardino County, California, has an area of over 20,000 square miles, making us the largest county in the lower-48 states. Federally managed lands account for 80 percent of our County. While these lands come with unique economic and conservation opportunities, these opportunities also add pressure to local infrastructure and services, including roads, bridges, emergency search and rescue, and law enforcement.

San Bernardino County must provide these critical services to every resident and visitor, even though less than 20 percent of our county is taxable land. Counties with large amounts of federal land ownership must look for creative solutions to promote economic development and provide critical services to residents and visitors. The County's climate and landscape offer some of the best solar and wind energy potential in the nation. PLREDA will help create good paying, local jobs in the renewable energy sector, diversify rural economies and promote economic growth. PLREDA creates a straightforward and streamlined permitting process tailored to the unique characteristics of renewable energy projects being developed on federal public lands.

For many renewable energy projects on public lands, the single greatest barrier to project development is the protracted federal permitting process. This issue was one of the goals of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), which was adopted in 2016 to streamline renewable energy development on federal lands in California. PLREDA would further complement the DRECP, which covered more than 22 million acres, of which half are in San Bernardino County. Due to long delays in federal permits, many renewable energy companies prefer to develop their projects on non-federal lands. Currently, only about 5 percent of our nation's wind and solar utility scale capacity comes from sources on federal lands. In San Bernardino County, through our planning department, we have more than two dozen solar projects completed or in the pipeline, ranging from 20 acres and a few

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megawatts to hundreds of acres. Streamlining the provisions included in the bill will lead to faster turnarounds in federal permitting, which will also help to meet President Biden's stated nationwide goal of 100 percent carbon-free power generation by 2035.

For the above reasons, San Bernardino County supports H.R. 3330, the Public Land Renewable Energy Development Act of 2021. If you have any questions regarding the County's position, please contact Brad Jensen, Director of Governmental and Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4281 or Bradley.Jensen@cao.sbcounty.gov .

Sincerely,

Curt Hagman
Fourth District Supervisor
Chair, San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors

cc: San Bernardino County Federal Legislative Delegation