



PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102

DIAN M. GRUENEICH
COMMISSIONER

TEL: (415) 703-2444
FAX: (415) 703-3933

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER DIAN M. GRUENEICH
CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DECEMBER 9, 2010

THANK YOU. I AM SO PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY FOR THIS WONDERFUL EVENT.

WE ARE CELEBRATING NOT ONLY THE GROUNDBREAKING OF A NEW TRANSMISSION LINE,
BUT THE CONTINUED AND UNPRECEDENTED COMMITMENT CALIFORNIA DEMONSTRATES
TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE TO CARRY RENEWABLE
RESOURCES.

WHEN GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER APPOINTED ME IN 2005 AS A COMMISSIONER TO
THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION, HE STRESSED THE NEED FOR
CALIFORNIA TO PLACE A HIGH PRIORITY ON DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TRANSMISSION,
PARTICULARLY TO CARRY RENEWABLE RESOURCES. HE HIGHLIGHTED TWO AREAS
ESPECIALLY – STREAMLINING CALIFORNIA'S PERMITTING PROCESS AND INCREASING
COORDINATION AMONG GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES. SINCE THEN, THE CHANGES WE HAVE
MADE ARE DRAMATIC.

IN THE LAST THREE YEARS ALONE, THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION HAS PERMITTED FIVE MAJOR NEW TRANSMISSION LINES CAPABLE OF CARRYING 9,000 MW OF ELECTRICITY. EACH ONE OF THE FIVE LINES HAS BEEN APPROVED TO CARRY RENEWABLE POWER. COLLECTIVELY, THESE PROJECTS OFFER ENOUGH TRANSMISSION CAPACITY TO BRING US CLOSE TO ACHIEVING CALIFORNIA'S 33% RENEWABLE PORTFOLIO STANDARD. THEY ARE ALSO A \$6 BILLION INVESTMENT IN CALIFORNIA'S ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE.

IN TURN, THESE LINES STIMULATE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW SOLAR THERMAL POWER PLANTS, NEW GEOTHERMAL PLANTS, UTILITY SCALE PHOTOVOLTAIC POWER PLANTS AND WIND FARMS. AS THE ASSIGNED COMMISSIONER OVERSEEING THE PERMITTING OF ALL FIVE LINES, LET ME ASSURE YOU THAT THIS IS AN ACHIEVEMENT UNPARALLELED IN THE COUNTRY. AND, CALIFORNIA'S OTHER ENERGY AGENCY, THE CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION, HAS PERMITTED IN THIS YEAR ALONE NINE NEW LARGE SOLAR PLANTS.

THE GROUNDBREAKING WE CELEBRATE TODAY FOR THE SUNRISE TRANSMISSION LINE LAUNCHES CONSTRUCTION OF A MUCH NEEDED PATHWAY FOR THE GEOTHERMAL, SOLAR THERMAL, AND WIND DEVELOPMENTS ALREADY UNDERWAY IN THE IMPERIAL VALLEY.

WE PAY TRIBUTE TODAY TO NOT ONLY THOSE INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT, BUT WE ALSO CELEBRATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL RENEWABLE PROJECTS STIMULATED BY THIS LINE, THE JOBS CREATED IN THE IMPERIAL VALLEY AND ELSEWHERE, AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW THAT HAS PROTECTED THE AREAS IMPACTED BY THESE LINES.

THESE ARE BENEFITS THAT WILL BE MULTIPLIED ACROSS THE STATE AS OUR OTHER RENEWABLE TRANSMISSION LINES ARE BUILT. THIS PARTNERSHIP OF POLICY, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEMONSTRATES THAT CALIFORNIA CONTINUES TO LEAD IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS COUNTRY'S NEW CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY.