

Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB)

SECOND QUARTER REPORT – 2026

October 08, 2026

Services provided by CAB staff to consumers in Q2-2026



**California Public
Utilities Commission**

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About The Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB)

The Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) is part of the External Affairs Division of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). CAB assists consumers who need support with their utility services.

CAB delivers the following assistance:

- Resolves consumer questions or complaints about regulated utility services (telecommunications, natural gas, electricity, and water)
- Resolves application appeals for California LifeLine¹ (a discounted phone program for income-qualified and other eligible consumers)
- Administers Limited English Proficiency (LEP) programs that assist consumers with telecommunications and energy issues
- Provides consumer contact data and analysis to CPUC decision-makers in support of shaping policies and enforcement against fraud and abuse
- Produces public reporting to stakeholders about the utility-related issues experienced by consumers

¹ <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/consumer-support/financial-assistance-savings-and-discounts/lifeline>

About This Report

This quarterly report highlights the services provided by the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) to consumers who have issues with utility services regulated by the CPUC. These utilities include telecommunications, electricity, natural gas, water, and transportation services.

All consumer questions and complaints received by CAB are referred to as **consumer contacts**. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this report is based on inquiries and complaints received by CAB from April through June 2026.

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Executive Summary

The California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) report for Q2-2026 highlights the vital support that CAB provides to utility consumers statewide. In this quarter, CAB continued its core mission of supporting utility consumers statewide by responding to **10,086** consumer contacts, including **2,764** complaints. CAB facilitated the return of just over **\$1,350,000** to consumers from utilities (including refunds and credit adjustments) across the CPUC-regulated utilities.

Overall, CAB consumer contacts increased by 3% from the previous quarter. Energy and telecommunications issues remained the primary drivers of contacts, accounting for a combined 83% of contacts in Q2-2026. Energy contacts fell by 6% while telecommunications contacts increased by 17% in Q2-2026. The most common energy issues centered on high bills, customer service issues, and alleged abusive marketing by Core Transport Agents (CTAs). Telecommunications contacts were driven largely by interest in LifeLine special pilot programs,² service outages, and internet-related billing or service issues.

Contacts related to vulnerable populations also increased. There were 2,441 contacts from consumers in Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) communities, an increase of 5% in Q2-2026. ESJ consumers continue to experience disproportionately severe impacts. While CTA complaints overall fell by almost one-third, they remained most highly concentrated in ESJ communities, where 41% of CTA contacts originated. Telecommunications outages, particularly those linked to cable theft, also continue to affect ESJ communities at relatively high rates.

CAB's TEAM and CHANGES programs also provide essential support for limited-English proficient, low-income, disabled, and senior consumers. In Q2-2026, the programs resolved 1,389 CHANGES cases and 1,388 TEAM cases and delivered almost \$54,000 in telecommunications-related refunds to consumers.

² California LifeLine pilot programs support broadband access for low-income families, and the LifeLine Foster program supports current and former foster children with access to free or discounted broadband and cellphones with internet access.

Q2-2026 CAB Service Highlights

- Received 10,086 questions and complaints from California utility consumers seeking assistance
- Facilitated \$1,360,000 in consumer refunds from utilities

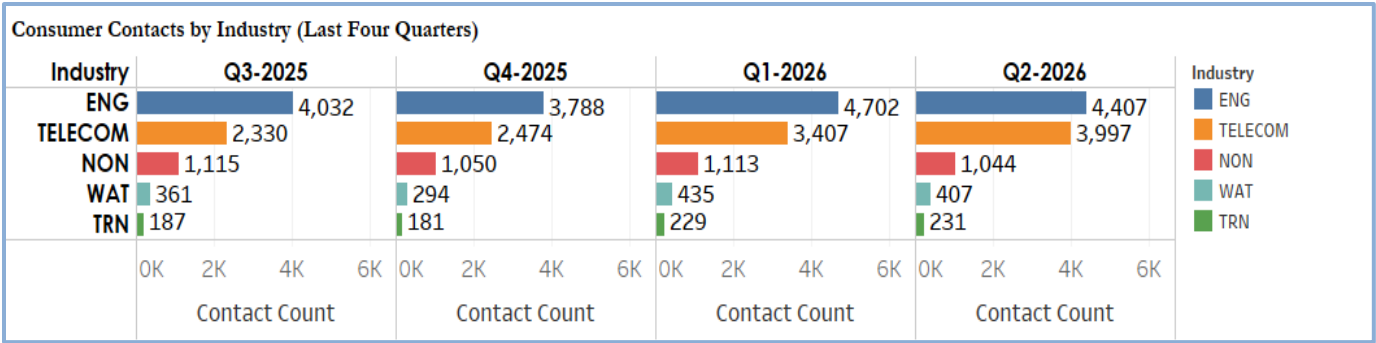
CAB Received 10,086 Total Consumer Contacts

Total consumer contacts (contacts) include all questions and complaints received by CAB from consumers, from April through June 2026.

Figure 1 displays the total contacts received about services in five industries (over the last four quarters). These industries are energy (ENG), telecommunications (TELECOM), non-regulated industries³ (NON), water (WAT), and transportation (TRN). Contacts are received via phone, mail, email, or a CPUC website complaint form. In Q2-2026, CAB received 10,086 contacts. Most of the inquiries (83%) were about consumers’ energy or telecommunications services.

Consistent with the previous three quarters, in Q2-2026, most CAB contacts were about consumers’ energy services. There were 4,407 energy contacts, a 6% drop from Q1-2026. Contacts about telecommunications services ranked second, with 3,997 contacts, which was an increase of 17% from Q1-2026. Contacts related to non-regulated industries were the next-largest category, at 1,044, a 6% decrease from Q1-2026. As in previous quarters, the water and transportation industries accounted for relatively small shares of total contacts, at 4% and 2%, respectively.

Figure 1: Consumer Contacts by Industry (Last Four Quarters)



³ Concerns, disputes, and/or issues regarding utilities that the CPUC does not regulate.

CAB Resolved 2,764 Informal Complaints (ICs)

CAB's Informal Complaint (IC) process provides consumers with a way to efficiently resolve disputes with their utility providers and is an alternative to formal legal proceedings.⁴ An IC is a written consumer contact expressing dissatisfaction with, or a dispute with, an action or practice by a provider regulated by the CPUC through tariffs, rules, orders, or other authority.⁵ The process helps ensure that consumer concerns are addressed promptly and fairly by CAB representatives who submit ICs directly to designated contacts in each utility.

Table 1 shows the distribution of ICs resolved (by industry) in the last four quarters. In Q2-2026, CAB resolved a total of 2,764 IC cases, with 97% concentrated in the energy and telecommunications sectors, thus continuing the trend of the previous three quarters. The majority, 65% of cases, were concentrated in the energy sector, accounting for 1,788 resolved cases in Q2-2026, a similar level to the previous quarter. The telecommunications sector represented the second-largest share, with 32% (879) of total resolved cases, up 9% from the previous quarter. As in the preceding quarter, water-related ICs remained relatively infrequent, with 97 resolved cases (4%), and no transportation-related ICs were received.

Table 1: Informal Complaints Resolved by Industry (Last Four Quarters)

Industry	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026	% of ICs Closed (Q2-2026 Only)
Energy	1,515	1,509	1,771	1,788	65%
Telecommunications	504	632	803	879	32%
Water	106	117	118	97	4%
Transportation	1	-	-	-	-
Total	2,126	2,258	2,692	2,764	100%*

* Due to rounding, the percentages will not exactly equal 100%

⁴ Consumers can also request a formal legal proceeding called a Formal Complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome of an IC.

⁵ CAB focuses on ICs. The CPUC also has a Formal Complaint (FC) process. An FC is a written legal document that claims that a utility regulated by the CPUC has violated state laws or the CPUC's orders or rules. An FC describes these violations, the injury suffered due to them, and the resolution requested from the CPUC. FCs are overseen by an Administrative Law Judge in a formal proceeding.

CAB Facilitated \$1,350,000 in Consumer Refunds

Table 2 details the breakdown of refunds from IC cases by industry and quarter. Notably, CAB IC cases filed on behalf of consumers resulted in utilities refunding just over \$1,350,000. This underscores the effectiveness of the CAB complaint resolution process.

Similar to overall contacts data, most of the refund total in Q2-2026 originated from the energy and telecommunications sectors. Energy providers have been the predominant source of refunds in each of the past four quarters and issued just over \$1,100,000 in refunds in Q2-2026, an increase of almost \$920,000 from Q1-2026. Telecommunications providers accounted for most of the remaining refunds, totaling almost \$200,000, an increase of 18% from Q1-2026. The total for water-related refunds remained relatively low compared with those for energy and telecommunications, at approximately \$40,000, though it was double last quarter's amount.

Table 2: Total Consumer Refunds⁶ by Industry & Quarter

Industry	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026
Energy	\$328,300	\$1,479,886	\$201,996	\$1,119,640
Telecommunications	\$102,283	\$145,900	\$162,772	\$ 191,845
Water	\$27,426	\$24,518	\$18,578	\$40,255
Transportation	\$95	\$55	-	-
Total	\$458,104	\$1,650,359	\$383,346	\$1,351,740

Success Story

In April 2026, CAB received a complaint from a water consumer that their February bill was several times higher than usual, resulting in an outstanding balance of almost **\$14,500** with their utility. After reaching out to their water utility, they filed an IC with CAB to help resolve their high billing issue. **Working with the consumer's utility, it was identified** that the unusually high bill was caused by an aging meter that was not recording usage accurately. Thanks to CAB's intervention, the utility replaced the meter and issued an **immediate credit of \$14,500 to the affected consumer.**

⁶ This table only accounts for refunds through CAB's IC process. Cases where a phone contact was transferred to a utility for expedited resolution are not reflected here.

Table 3 presents the median amounts refunded to consumers across industries from ICs, with water at \$370, energy at \$360, and telecommunications at \$240. Although the median refund from telecom providers was lower than that from energy or water, this sector had the highest number of refunds (337). The water industry had the fewest refunds issued but the highest median refund amount.

Table 3: Consumer Refunds from ICs (Q2-2026)

Industry	Median Return Amount	Count of Returns	Minimum Return Amount	Maximum Return Amount
Water	\$370	14	\$93	\$14,491
Energy	\$360	211	\$0.20	\$744,875
Telecommunications	\$240	337	\$1.48	\$18,791

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Programs – TEAM & CHANGES

CAB oversees the Telecommunications Education and Assistance in Multiple-Languages (TEAM) and Community Help and Awareness of Natural Gas and Electric Services (CHANGES) programs. These programs support limited-English proficient (LEP) consumers who need help managing their utility services. The programs offer support through individually tailored case assistance (including billing issues), educational classes, and outreach.

This quarter, the Community-based organizations (CBOs) that participate in the programs helped LEP consumers recover almost \$54,000 from their telecommunications providers. In total, the CBOs completed 1,389 CHANGES cases and 1,388 TEAM cases.

Energy Utilities Recap with Q2-2026 Highlights

This section reviews all energy-related consumer contacts that CAB received this quarter.

- CAB received 4,407 energy-related contacts in Q2-2026, of which the 10 utilities with the most consumer contacts accounted for 93% of the total.
- Contacts were primarily driven by consumer concerns about high bills, followed by customer service issues, and abusive marketing allegations that were particularly concentrated among customers of Core Transport Agents (CTAs).
- CTA-related contacts accounted for 14% of all contacts regarding the 10 utilities with the most contacts.
- Southern California Edison was the subject of the highest volume of contacts (39%), followed by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (26%), reflecting concentration among large investor-owned utilities.
- Half of the 10 energy utilities with the most contacts met CAB's 20-business-day response expectation.

Energy Consumer Contacts

In Q2-2026, CAB received 4,407 energy-related contacts. The 10 energy utilities with the most contacts accounted for 4,078, or 93% of the total. Most contacts originated from customers of investor-owned utilities (IOUs), led by Southern California Edison (SCE) at 39% of all energy contacts, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) at 26%, Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) at 7%, and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) also at 7%. Core Transport Agents (CTAs) accounted for 14% of all energy contacts, driven primarily by SFE Energy Inc. (178 contacts), AAA Natural Gas (100 contacts), and StateWise Energy California LLC (98 contacts). Many of these CTA-related contacts concerned alleged abusive marketing practices. Further details are provided in the [ESJ Energy Contacts](#)

[Core Transport Agents](#) (CTA) and Alleged Abusive Marketing Complaints section later in this report.

Table 4 ranks the 10 energy utilities with the most contacts and their corresponding percentage of total contacts.

Table 4: Energy Utilities with Most Contacts and as a % of Total Contacts (Q2-2026)

Energy Utility	Total	% of Total ⁷
Southern California Edison	1,704	39%
Pacific Gas and Electric Company	1,138	26%
Southern California Gas Company	324	7%
San Diego Gas & Electric	305	7%
SFE Energy Inc.	178	4%
AAA Natural Gas	100	2%
StateWise Energy California LLC	98	2%
Big Tree Energy CA, LLC	82	2%
Wave Energy LLC	78	2%
Mirabito Natural Gas, LLC dba Evergreen Gas & Electric	71	2%
10 Energy Utilities With Most Contacts	4,078	93%
Total Energy Contacts (All Energy Utilities)	4,407	100%

Table 5 highlights the 10 energy utilities with the most Informal Complaints (ICs) received. The table is ranked by the average number of business days each utility takes to address these complaints. When CAB forwards an IC to a utility, it is expected to respond to CAB within 20 business days.

In Q2-2026, energy utilities responded to 1,788 consumer ICs. Half of the top 10 utilities met CAB's target response timeframe, meaning the other half did not. Wave Energy recorded the slowest average response time at 27 business days. By comparison, SCE and PG&E, which handled the largest volumes (673 and 542 ICs, respectively), maintained significantly faster average response times of 9 and 12 business days. Big Tree Energy CA registered the quickest response time, averaging 5 business days, though it accounted for a relatively small share of total IC responses.

⁷ Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 5: Energy Utilities with Most ICs & Average Response Times (Q2-2026)

Utility Name	Avg. Utility Response Business Days	Count of Utility Responses
Big Tree Energy CA, LLC	5	23
AAA Natural Gas	7	34
Southern California Edison	9	673
Mirabito Natural Gas, LLC dba Evergreen Gas & Electric	11	25
Pacific Gas and Electric Company	12	542
San Diego Gas & Electric	21	153
SFE Energy Inc.	22	59
Southern California Gas Company	22	129
StateWise Energy California LLC	22	35
Wave Energy LLC	27	24

Most Frequent Contacts by Subcategory

When CAB reports data on consumer contacts, each case is categorized by the main reason for the contact, referred to as the “primary subcategory.” For example, if a consumer calls about a high bill and difficulty reaching customer service, “High Bill” would be selected as the primary subcategory.

CAB’s Consumer Information Management System (CIMS) allows staff to assign a primary subcategory to each contact and capture additional issues through related subcategories, referred to as attributes. These attributes help identify the full range of concerns a consumer raises in a single contact. For example, “Non-jurisdictional (NJ) Customer Service” may be added as an attribute to a contact whose primary subcategory is “High Bill.” Because a single contact may include multiple subcategories, the total number of subcategory selections typically exceeds the total number of individual consumer contacts. This approach provides a more complete view of consumer concerns and allows CAB to analyze both the primary issues and related issues raised by each contact.

Table 6 presents the most frequently selected energy subcategories for this quarter. The top 10 subcategories accounted for 5,601 subcategory selections, representing 69% of all energy-related subcategories. The most prevalent subcategory was “High Bill,” with 1,407 selections, accounting for 17% of all subcategory selections. The next most common subcategories were “NJ Customer Service” (1,151) and “Abusive Marketing” (602), representing 14% and 7% of the subcategory counts, respectively.

Table 6: Most Common Subcategories for Energy Contacts (Q2-2026)

Subcategory	Count of Subcategory Selection	% of Total
High Bill	1,407	17%
NJ Customer Service	1,151	14%
Abusive Marketing	602	7%
Payment Arrangements	574	7%
Disconnection Non-Payment	481	6%
Delayed Orders/Missed Appointments	437	5%
Disputed Customer of Record	255	3%
Other Charges	254	3%
Meter Inaccuracy/Reading Issues	229	3%
Outage	211	3%
Total Top 10 Subcategories	5,601	69%*
Total of All Subcategory Counts	8,150	100%

** Due to rounding, the percentage will not be exact*

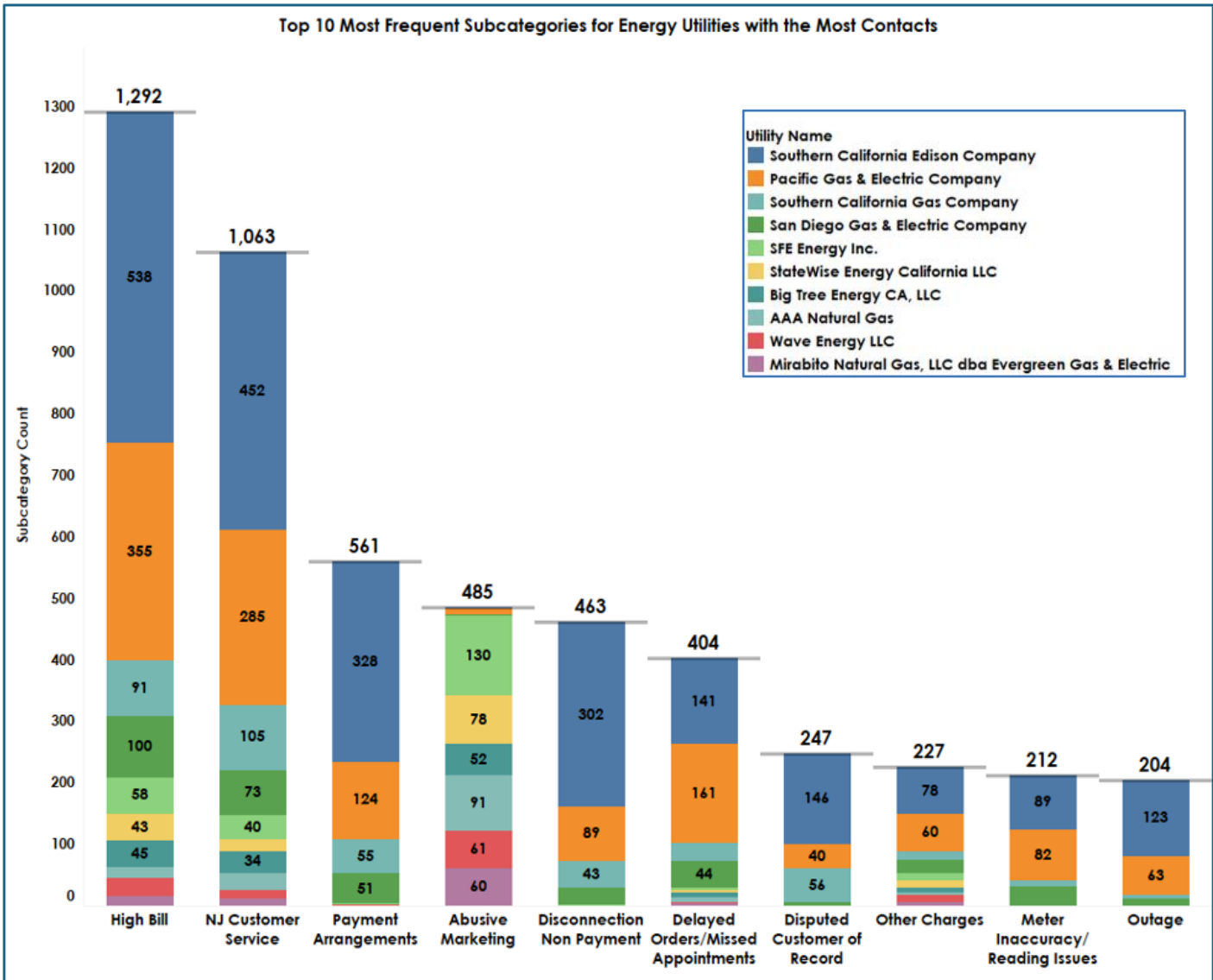
Figure 2 highlights the most frequently reported issues (subcategories) among the 10 energy utilities with the most contacts in Q2-2026. The two most frequent subcategories were “High Bill” and “NJ Customer Service,” with a combined 2,355 selections, or 29% of all subcategory selections. The next three most frequent issues were “Payment Arrangements” (561 selections), “Abusive Marketing” (485), and “Disconnection Non-Payment” (463).

Within this dataset, SCE and PG&E were the subject of over half of the selected subcategories. SCE recorded the highest overall volume of energy contacts (Table 4) and led in eight of the top 10 subcategories. SCE’s highest-volume subcategories were “High Bill” (538 contacts), followed by “NJ Customer Service” (452), “Payment Arrangements” (328), and “Disconnection Non-Payment” (302).

The “NJ Customer Service” subcategory captures customer service issues outside the CPUC’s direct jurisdiction, such as difficulty reaching representatives, excessive call transfers, or unsatisfactory customer interactions. Although all major utilities received contacts across multiple categories, the largest investor-owned utilities (IOUs) accounted for the majority of contacts, which is generally consistent with their large customer bases and the complexity of their billing, metering, and service operations.

The “Abusive Marketing” subcategory (485 selections) was predominantly driven by Core Transport Agent (CTA) customers, with significant contributions from SFE Energy, StateWise Energy California, and AAA Natural Gas. These contacts generally involved allegations of misleading marketing practices, e.g., insufficient disclosures, unauthorized enrollment or service modifications, unclear information, and potentially deceptive pricing representations.

Figure 2: Top 10 Most Frequent Subcategories for Energy Utilities with the Most Contacts



To conclude, energy-related contacts in Q2-2026 were driven primarily by concerns with high bills, non-jurisdictional customer service issues, and complaints from CTA customers involving allegedly misleading or aggressive marketing practices. The largest IOUs, especially SCE and PG&E, continued to account for most energy contacts, which is generally consistent with their large customer bases and broad service territories. However, while CTAs represent a smaller segment of the energy market than IOUs, they generated a disproportionately high share of alleged abusive marketing-related contacts.

Half of the IOUs with the highest IC volumes failed to meet CAB’s 20-business-day response requirement in Q2-2026. Therefore, ongoing CAB oversight of overdue utility responses is necessary to improve outcomes. In addition, CAB will continue to monitor billing clarity, customer service responsiveness, and CTA marketing conduct to ensure consumers receive consistent, reliable, and timely support across energy providers.

Telecommunications Utilities Recap with Q2-2026 Highlights

This section reviews telecommunications and California LifeLine consumer contacts received by CAB in Q2-2026.

- CAB received 3,997 telecommunications contacts in Q2-2026, with the 10 telecommunications utilities with the most contacts accounting for 73% of total contacts (identical to the previous quarter), driven primarily by customer service issues, outages, and service delays.
- AT&T California generated the highest volume of contacts, representing 28% of the total telecommunications contacts.
- Four of the five telecommunications utilities with the highest Informal Complaints (ICs) volume met CAB's 20-business-day response expectation; AT&T California exceeded the timeframe, although it handled the highest volume of IC responses.
- CAB received 1,513 California LifeLine contacts in Q2-2026, a 61% increase from Q1-2026, driven primarily by higher written contact volume and increased contacts related to the California Lifeline pilot program that supports broadband access for low-income households⁸ and the California LifeLine Foster Youth program, which provides eligible current and former youth with free or discounted phone service.⁹
- In addition to pilot-related programs, California LifeLine contacts were driven primarily by application or annual recertification issues (particularly missing or ineligible documentation), followed by consumer inquiries about applying for new devices or issues with existing devices.

Telecommunications Consumer Contacts

Table 7 presents total telecommunications contacts and contact volumes for Q2-2026 for the 10 companies with the most contacts, along with their share of overall contacts. CAB received 3,997 telecommunications-related contacts, and the companies with the top 10 number of contacts accounted for 2,909 contacts, or 73% of the total. This indicates that a substantial portion of consumer concerns remains concentrated among a relatively small group of providers.

AT&T California remained the largest contributor, with 1,130 contacts (28% of total contacts) in Q2-2026, consistent with its position as the state's largest wireline provider and corresponding customer base. Comcast's telecommunications subsidiaries¹⁰ were next, with a combined 588 contacts (15%), followed by

⁸ [CPUC Launches Pilot to Improve Broadband for Low-Income Households Through California LifeLine](#)

⁹ [California LifeLine Foster Program](#)

¹⁰ Comcast Phone of California, LLC and Comcast OTRL1 LLC combined

Frontier California Inc., with 304 contacts (8%), and Charter Fiberlink CA-CCO had 270 contacts (7%). The remaining utilities in the Top 10 list each contributed a relatively small share, between 2% and 4% of total contacts.

Table 7: Company Contact Count & Share of Total (Q2-2026)

Top 10 Telecommunications Utilities by Contacts	Total	% of Total
AT&T California	1,130	28%
Comcast Phone of California, LLC	514	13%
Frontier California Inc.	304	8%
Charter Fiberlink CA-CCO, LLC	270	7%
T-Mobile West LLC	173	4%
Cellco Partnership	157	4%
AT&T Mobility Wireless Operations Holdings Inc.	137	3%
TruConnect Communications, Inc.	79	2%
Comcast OTR1, LLC	74	2%
Verizon Value, Inc.	71	2%
Total Top 10 Telecommunications Contacts	2,909	73%
Total - All Telecommunications Contacts	3,997	100%

Table 8 highlights the five telecommunications utilities with the highest number of Informal Complaints (ICs) received in Q2-2026 and ranks these providers by the average number of business days taken to address the ICs. When CAB forwards an IC to a utility, the utility is required by law to respond to CAB within 20 business days.

In Q2-2026, telecommunications utilities responded to 879 ICs. The five utilities shown in Table 8 accounted for 715 of those responses. AT&T California handled the highest volume, with 402 ICs. The company's average response time was 32 business days (up from 26 business days in Q1-2026) and was the only one of the five selected utilities to exceed the 20-day expectation. AT&T Mobility Wireless Operations Holdings Inc. recorded the fastest average turnaround time in this group at 17 business days, followed by the Cellco Partnership at 18 business days and Frontier California Inc. at 19 business days. Overall, four of the utilities, with the five highest ICs, met the 20-business-day response expectation, reflecting generally timely performance among the major providers.

Table 8: Utilities with Highest IC volumes and Average Utility Response Times (Q2-2026)

Utility Name	Average Utility Response (Business Days)	Count of Utility Responses
AT&T California	32	402
Frontier California Inc.	19	87
T-Mobile West LLC	18	79
Cellco Partnership	18	72
AT&T Mobility Wireless Operations Holdings Inc.	17	75
Total		715

Most Frequent Contacts by Subcategories

When CAB reports consumer contact data, each case is categorized by its main reason for contact, referred to as the “primary subcategory.” For example, if a consumer reports both a high bill and difficulty reaching customer service, “High Bill” would be recorded as the primary subcategory under the broader “Billing” category.

CAB’s Consumer Information Management System (CIMS) allows staff to assign one primary subcategory to each contact, along with additional subcategories, called “attributes”, to capture other issues raised during the same interaction. For example, “Non-jurisdictional (NJ) Customer Service” would be recorded as an attribute. Because multiple subcategories can be assigned to a single contact, the total number of subcategory selections typically exceeds the total number of individual consumer contacts. This approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of consumer concerns.

Figure 3 presents the most frequently selected telecommunications subcategories (excluding California LifeLine) for consumer contacts associated with utilities with the most ICs in Q2-2026. It reflects total volumes by subcategory and highlights the primary drivers of consumer concerns.

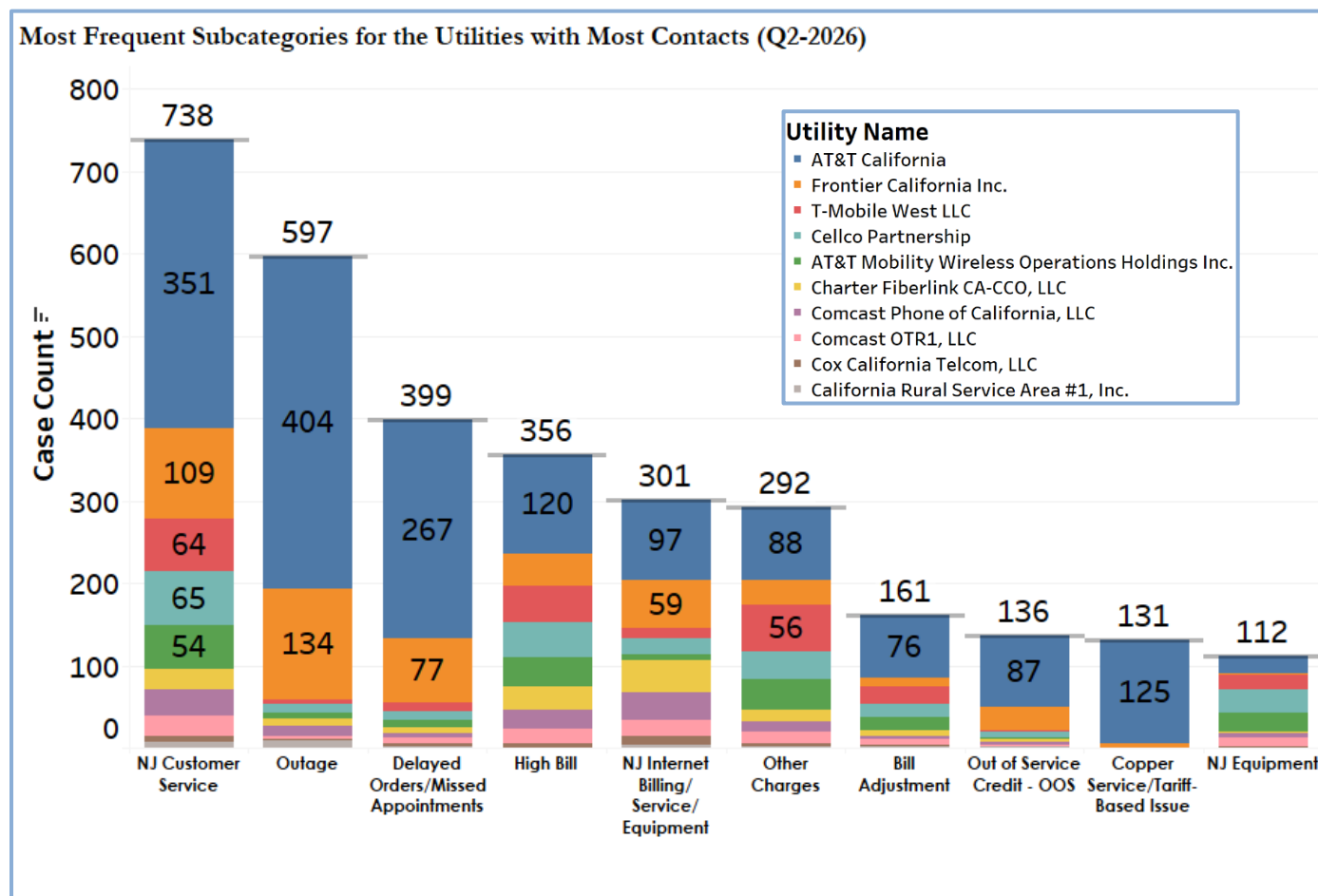
The leading subcategory was “Non-Jurisdictional (NJ) Customer Service,”¹¹ with 738 contacts, highlighting persistent customer service challenges across providers. “Outage” ranked second with 597 contacts, indicating disruptions that particularly affected AT&T California’s services. “Delayed Orders/Missed Appointments” ranked third with 399 contacts, followed by “High Bill” with 356 contacts, reflecting ongoing billing and service-delivery issues. Additional subcategories, such as “NJ Internet Billing/Service/Equipment”¹² (301

¹¹ Non-Jurisdictional (NJ) Customer Service cases do not fall under CPUC jurisdiction and relate to customer service-related issues, such as being transferred from one person to another multiple times during a single phone call, not being able to reach the correct department or someone who could address the issue, and utility representative challenges.

¹² A service that connects you to the web. Any complaint that involves charges for internet service and related service concerns or equipment such as modems, routers, etc.

contacts) and “Other Charges”¹³ (292 contacts), further underscore concerns related to billing and internet services. Across these subcategories, AT&T California accounted for a significant share of contacts, particularly related to customer service, outages, service delays, and high bills.

Figure 3: Most Frequent Subcategories for the Utilities with Most Contacts (Q2-2026)¹⁴



¹³ Roaming, 411, returned check charges, transfer charges, activation fee, closed account charges (i.e., consumer terminated service with the utility and is still receiving bills even though the account balance was \$0 at termination). This includes pre-paid cards.

¹⁴ The figure excludes California LifeLine.

California LifeLine

CAB assists consumers with California LifeLine-related inquiries, reviews appeals filed by consumers who were disqualified from the program by the Third-Party Administrator (TPA), and helps resolve billing issues.

Figure 4 summarizes California LifeLine contacts from Q3-2025 through Q2-2026. In Q2-2026, CAB received 1,513 California LifeLine contacts, a quarterly increase of 61%. This increase was underpinned by a surge in written contacts, which rose to 1,186 (up 93% from the previous quarter), while phone contacts remained nearly unchanged. Overall, written contacts accounted for most California LifeLine inquiries in Q2-2026, continuing the shift in mode of communication that started in the previous quarter.

Figure 4: California LifeLine Contacts Received in the Last Four Quarters

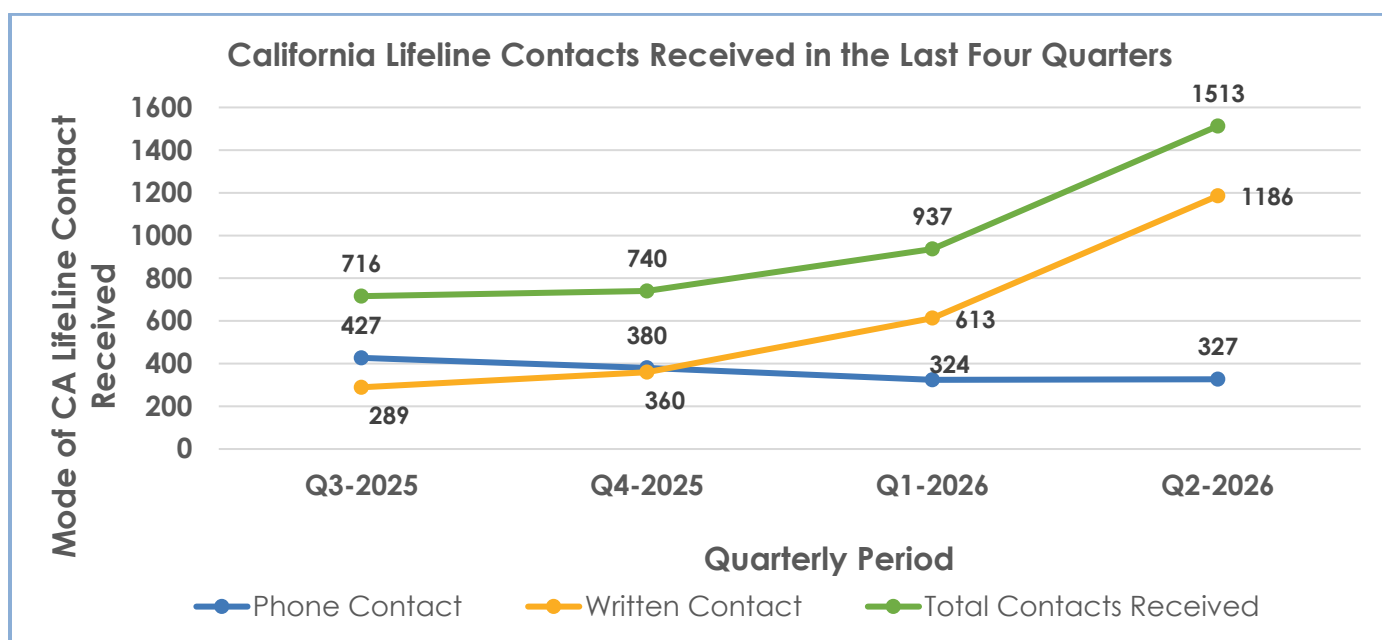
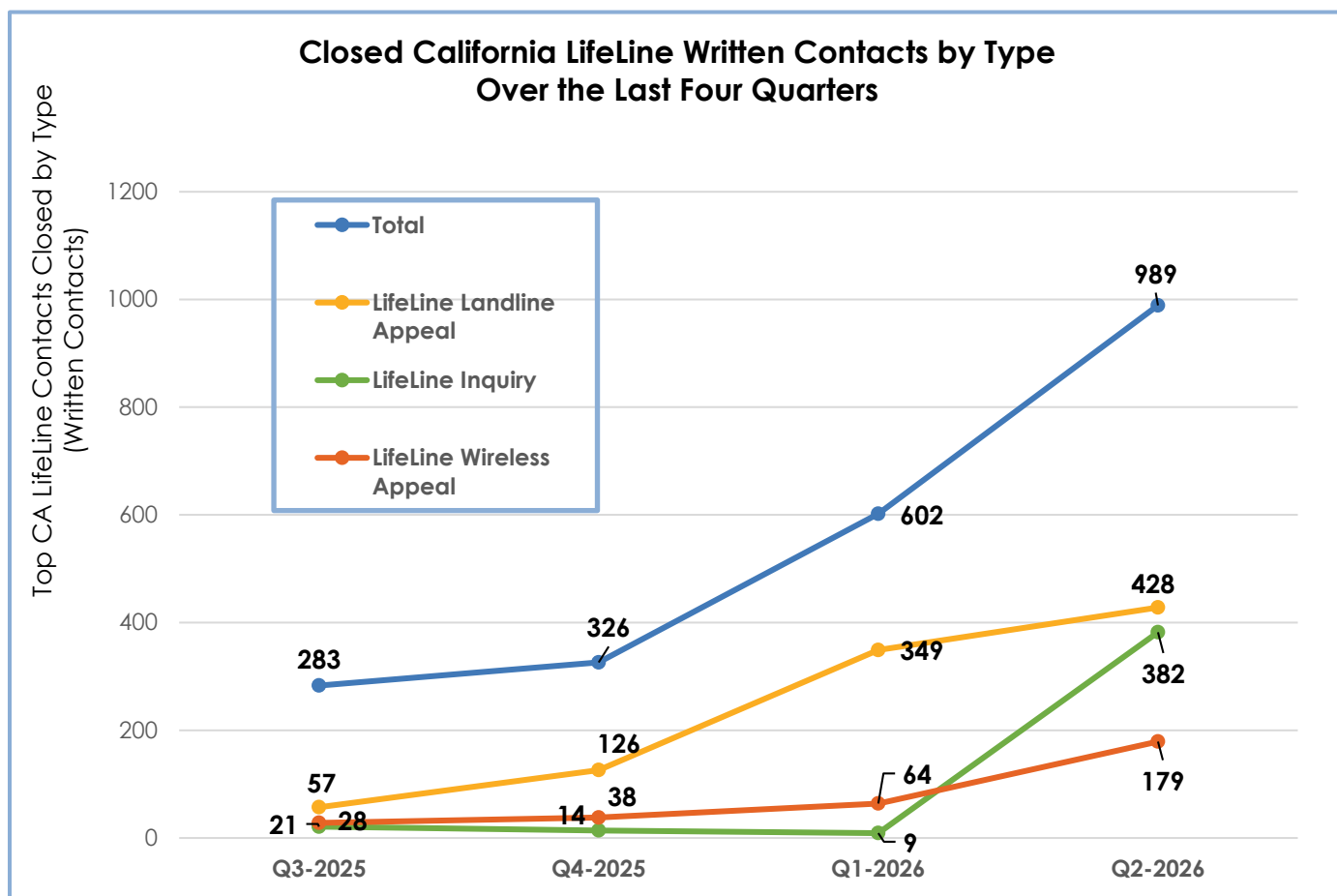


Figure 5 summarizes the top LifeLine written contacts closed over the last four quarters, highlighting recent trends from Q3-2025 to Q2-2026.

Overall, total closed California LifeLine written contacts increased by 64%, from 602 in Q1-2026 to 989 in Q2-2026. “California LifeLine Landline Appeal” (LLA) remained the largest category, rising 23% from 349 to 428 contacts over the same period. “LifeLine Inquiries” followed with 382 contacts in Q2-2026, up significantly from just 9 contacts in Q1-2026, while “California LifeLine Wireless Appeals” nearly tripled, increasing from 64 to 179 contacts.

Figure 5: Closed California LifeLine Written Contacts by Type Over the Last Four Quarters

Most Frequent Types of California LifeLine contacts

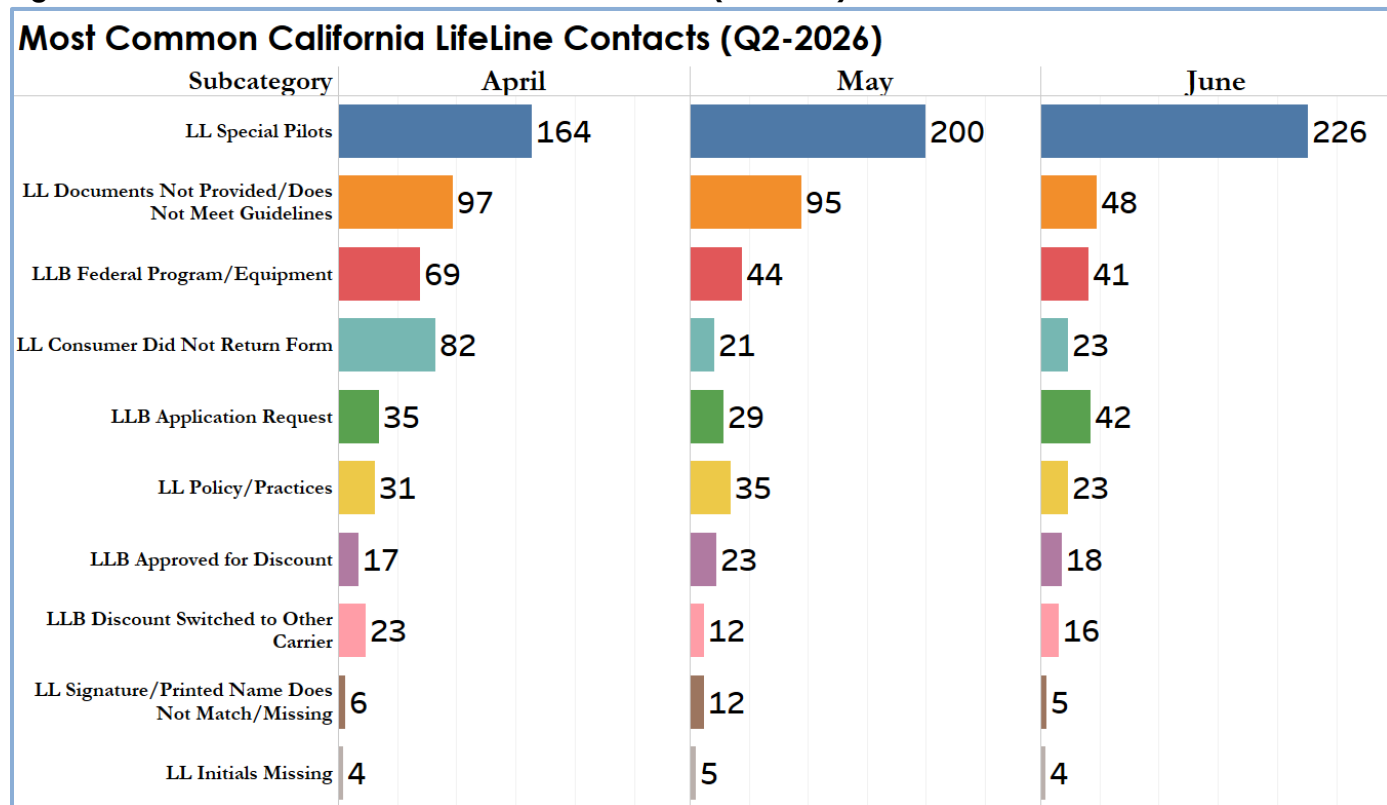
Figure 6 illustrates the most common California LifeLine subcategories for Q2-2026, showing monthly contact volumes for April, May, and June. The figure highlights how key California LifeLine issues fluctuate over the quarter and identifies the primary drivers of consumer contacts.

“LifeLine Special Pilots” emerged as the leading issue in Q2-2026, increasing steadily from 164 contacts in April to 200 in May and 226 in June. These contacts are related to the California LifeLine pilot programs that expand broadband access for low-income families and the California LifeLine Foster program, which provides free or discounted cellphones and internet services to current and former foster youth.

As in the previous quarter, “LL Documents Not Provided/Does Not Meet Guidelines” remained a major issue, though it declined from 97 contacts in April to 48 in June. This category reflects challenges in the California LifeLine annual recertification process, particularly those related to missing or ineligible

documentation. “LLB Federal Program/Equipment”¹⁵ fell from 72 contacts in April to 45 in June, driven by consumer inquiries about new device applications and issues with existing devices. The next-largest subcategory, “LL Consumer Did Not Return Form,” also trended sharply downward over the quarter.

Figure 6: Most Common California LifeLine Contacts (Q2-2026)



¹⁵ Consumer attempting to secure a free/discounted phone or accessories, i.e., SIM card, charger, through their service provider, or has not received replacement equipment.

Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Consumer Contacts for Q2-2026

ESJ Overview

The CPUC's mission is to ensure that all Californians can access safe, clean, and affordable utility services and infrastructure. The CPUC has created an Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Action Plan to serve as both a commitment to advancing these principles and a framework for integrating ESJ considerations throughout the agency's work. The ESJ Action Plan defines ESJ Communities as including:¹⁶

- Low-income or communities of color that have been underrepresented in the policy setting or decision-making process.
- Subject to a disproportionate impact from one or more environmental hazards.
- Likely to experience disparate implementation of environmental regulations and socio-economic investments in their communities.
- Disadvantaged Communities (DACs): defined as census tracts that score in the top **25%** of CalEnviroScreen 3.0, along with those that score within the highest **5%** of CalEnviroScreen 3.0's Pollution Burden but do not receive an overall CalEnviroScreen score.
- All Tribal lands; low-income households;¹⁷ and low-income census tracts.¹⁸

Table 9 is a quick reference guide to the terminology used throughout this section. CAB uses zip codes instead of census tracts to report on ESJ and focuses primarily on the zip codes that fall into the ESJ 75th-100th Percentile, or ESJ Quartile 1, which represents the most disadvantaged communities (DACs). All other consumers fit into one of the other categories.

Table 9: ESJ/CAB Terminology Conversion Table

ESJ Designation by Zip Code	ESJ Quartile	Classification
ESJ 75th - 100th percentile	Quartile 1	Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)
ESJ 50 th - 74 th percentile	Quartile 2	-
ESJ 25 th - 49 th percentile	Quartile 3	-
ESJ 0 - 24 th percentile	Quartile 4	-

¹⁶ <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/news-and-outreach/documents/news-office/key-issues/esj/esj-action-plan-v2jw.pdf>, See pp. 11-12.

¹⁷ Household incomes below 80 percent of the area median income.

¹⁸ Census tracts with household incomes less than 80 percent of the area or state median income.

Energy and Telecommunications ESJ Highlights

- CAB received 2,441 ESJ Quartile 1 (75th-100th percentile) contacts from energy, telecommunications, and water consumers.
- CAB received 743 contacts regarding CTAs, of which 41% originated from ESJ zip codes.
- A total of 1,657 telecommunications outage contacts involving AT&T California and Frontier California were received over the past 12 months. These two companies accounted for nearly all telecommunication outage contacts, with other providers accounting for less than 1%. Of the 1,657 outage contacts, 561 (34% of the total) originated from disadvantaged communities.

Telecommunications, Energy, and Water ESJ Contacts

Table 10 shows an overall increase in ESJ consumer contacts in Q2-2026, though trends varied by industry. Compared to the last quarter, total ESJ consumer contacts increased by 5%, to 2,441 in Q2-2026. By sector, telecommunications and water contacts increased by 20% and 7%, respectively, while energy contacts fell by 6%.

Table 10: Energy and Telecommunications ESJ Contacts (ESJ 75th – 100th percentile)

Industry	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026
Energy	986	1,029	1,302	1,221
Telecommunications	668	652	901	1,083
Water	108	97	128	137
Total	1,762	1,778	2,331	2,441

Top Complaints from Consumers in DACs

Disconnection Non-Payment (DNP) Contacts

Table 11 shows that total DNP contacts increased by 37% this quarter compared with Q1-2026. This was mainly due to energy sector DNP contacts, which surged by 50%, while telecommunications and water grew by 6% and 2%, respectively. Although DACs represent 25% of the consumer base, they generated 35% of all DNP contacts over the past year, including 36% of energy and water contacts, and 29% of telecommunications contacts. This highlights a disproportionate impact of DNP issues among DAC consumers.

Table 11: Disconnection Non-Payment Contacts by Industry and Percentage of DAC Contacts

Industry	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026	Total DNP contacts	Total DAC DNP Contacts	% DAC contacts
Energy	416	531	321	481	1,749	632	36%
Telecommunications	37	40	49	52	178	51	29%
Water	47	27	65	64	203	73	36%
Total	500	598	435	597	2,130	756	35%

Table 12 highlights a rise in DAC DNP contacts this quarter compared with Q1-2026. Total contacts grew 38% (from 151 to 208), driven primarily by a 47% surge in the energy sector. Telecommunications contacts rose by 14%, while water contacts remained flat. Over the past four quarters, energy has accounted for the vast majority of DAC DNP contacts, at 84%.

Table 12: Disconnection Non-Payment ESJ Contacts by Industry

Industry	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026	% Change (Q1-2026 to Q2-2026)	DAC DNP Contacts (Yearly Total)	Yearly DAC DNP Contacts as % of Total*
Energy	145	200	116	171	47%	632	84%
Telecommunications	15	6	14	16	14%	51	7%
Water	18	13	21	21	0%	73	10%
Total	178	219	151	208	38%	756	100%

* The percentages in each row total are rounded and will not exactly add up to 100%

Table 13 details the energy IOU-related DNP contacts received this quarter. The DNP volume grew steadily each month, from 134 in April to 185 in June, reaching a quarterly total of 462. Southern California Edison (SCE) accounted for the vast majority of these inquiries, generating 302 contacts (65% of the total).

Table 13: Disconnection Contacts for Energy IOUs by Month (Q2-2026)

Utility Name	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Total (Q2-2026)
Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)	33	18	38	89
San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E)	9	5	14	28
Southern California Edison (SCE)	73	108	121	302
Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas)	19	12	12	43
Total	134	143	185	462

Table 14 outlines total residential disconnections reported by the four major IOUs in Q2-2026, along with the proportion that occurred within ESJ ZIP codes. Disconnections declined steadily throughout the quarter, from 57,847 in April to 47,791 in June, for a total of 157,863. SCE accounted for over half of all disconnections, with 46% occurring in ESJ communities. Disconnections in ESJ ZIP codes also comprised 55% of SoCalGas, 33% of PG&E, and 12% of SDG&E disconnections. Overall, 39% of all Q2-2026 disconnections occurred in ESJ areas, highlighting their disproportionate impact on these communities.

Table 14: IOUs' Total Monthly Residential Disconnections & Percentage of ESJ Impacted

Company	April 2026	May 2026	June 2026	Total Disconnects	ESJ Disconnects	% ESJ
Southern California Edison	27,707	28,732	26,680	83,119	38,083	46%
Pacific Gas and Electric Company	20,261	15,142	13,057	48,460	15,784	33%
San Diego Gas & Electric	5,460	4,699	4,917	15,076	1,784	12%
Southern California Gas Co.	4,419	3,652	3,137	11,208	6,137	55%
Total	57,847	52,225	47,791	157,863	61,788	39%

ESJ Energy Contacts

Core Transport Agents (CTA) and Alleged Abusive Marketing Complaints

CTAs are non-utility natural gas suppliers that purchase natural gas for residential and small commercial customers. California consumers may choose to receive their natural gas supply from a CTA while continuing to pay their local utility for pipeline delivery. Depending on the selected billing structure, consumers may receive a consolidated bill from the utility or CTA, or separate bills from both. While the CPUC does not regulate CTA rates, CTAs must register with the CPUC to operate in California. Consequently, if a CTA fails to respond to complaints referred by the CPUC, the CPUC maintains the authority to suspend or revoke its registration.

Table 15 outlines the CTA contact volume received by CAB over the past four quarters. In Q2-2026, CAB received 743 CTA contacts - a 31% decrease from Q1-2026. Because ESJ contacts declined at a similar rate, the share of CTA contacts originating from ESJ areas remained stable at approximately 41%. As noted previously, while ESJ communities comprise only 25% of the overall consumer population, they continue to account for a disproportionate share of all CTA contacts across all four quarters.

Table 15: CTA Contacts by Quarter

Contacts	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026
Count of CTA Contacts	664	652	1,084	743
Count ESJ CTA Contacts	248	265	430	304
% ESJ Contacts	37%	41%	40%	41%

Table 16 shows that alleged abusive marketing remains the primary driver of CTA contacts across all ESJ quartiles, consistently accounting for over two-thirds of both overall and ESJ-specific CTA inquiries each quarter.

Table 16: Alleged Abusive Marketing Contacts as a share of Total CTA & ESJ Contacts

	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026
Total CTA Contacts	664	652	1,084	743
Count of Alleged Abusive Marketing Contacts	503	497	775	535
% of Alleged Abusive Marketing Contacts	76%	76%	71%	72%
Total ESJ CTA Contacts	248	265	430	304
Count of Alleged Abusive Marketing Contacts	179	192	290	204
% of ESJ Alleged Abusive Marketing Contacts	72%	72%	67%	67%

Table 17 shows that CTA contacts were heavily concentrated among just 10 companies, which accounted for 718 (97%) of the 743 CTA contacts in Q2-2026. Of these contacts, 72% stemmed from alleged abusive marketing.

Table 17: CTAs With Most Contacts & Their Share of Alleged Abusive Marketing Complaints (Q2-2026)

Utility Name	Total Contacts	Total Alleged Abusive Marketing Contacts	% of all Contacts Due to Alleged Abusive Marketing
SFE Energy Inc.	178	119	67%
AAA Natural Gas	100	91	91%
Big Tree Energy CA, LLC	98	70	71%
Wave Energy LLC	82	58	71%
United Energy Trading LLC dba Collective Energy	78	57	73%
StateWise Energy California LLC	71	47	66%
Mirabito Natural Gas, LLC dba Evergreen Gas & Electric	47	34	72%
Vista Energy Marketing LP	29	18	62%
Spark Energy Gas LLC	18	15	83%
Peak Six Power and Gas LLC	17	9	53%
Total	718	518	72%

Table 18 highlights the CTAs with the highest contact volumes. Customers in ESJ areas generated a disproportionate 43% of contacts involving these CTA providers, with nearly two-thirds of those ESJ contacts alleging abusive marketing.

Table 18: Total CTA Contacts & ESJ Related Alleged Abusive Marketing Complaints (Q2-2026)

Utility Name	Total Contacts	Total ESJ Contacts	% ESJ Contacts	ESJ Alleged Abusive Marketing Contacts	% of ESJ Contacts Due to Alleged Abusive Marketing
SFE Energy Inc.	178	75	42%	46	61%
AAA Natural Gas	100	24	24%	20	83%
Big Tree Energy CA, LLC	98	53	54%	37	70%
Wave Energy LLC	82	53	65%	19	36%
United Energy Trading LLC dba Collective Energy	78	38	49%	27	71%
StateWise Energy California LLC	71	22	31%	20	91%
Mirabito Natural Gas, LLC dba Evergreen Gas & Electric	47	16	34%	12	75%
Vista Energy Marketing LP	29	14	48%	5	36%
Spark Energy Gas LLC	18	8	44%	7	88%
Peak Six Power and Gas LLC	17	4	24%	2	50%
Total	718	307	43%	195	64%

ESJ Telecommunications Contacts

Telecommunications Outage Complaints

CAB receives consumer complaints regarding telecommunications wireline outages, including service restoration delays and cable theft. This section examines recent outage trends and their specific impact on consumers in ESJ areas.

Table 19 outlines telecommunications outage contacts received over the past four quarters for the two highest-volume providers, AT&T California and Frontier California. Together, they accounted for 1,657 contacts, representing nearly all outage complaints during this period, with all other providers combined making up less than 1%. AT&T generated the vast majority of these contacts. Additionally, 30% of the combined outage contacts for both companies originated from consumers in ESJ areas.

Table 19: Total Outage Contacts and the % of ESJ Contacts (AT&T and Frontier CA)

Utility Name	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026	Total	Total ESJ Contacts (Q2-2026)	% ESJ Contacts (Q2-2026)
AT&T California	204	325	502	325	1,356	95	29%
Frontier California, Inc.	53	55	93	100	301	32	32%
Total	257	380	595	425	1,657	127	30%

Table 20 highlights outage and cable theft-related contacts from ESJ ZIP codes for AT&T California and Frontier California, the two highest-volume telecommunications providers. In Q2-2026, cable theft accounted for 43% of their combined ESJ outage volume.

Table 20: Total ESJ Outages & ESJ Cable Theft Contacts (AT&T and Frontier CA)

Contact Type (ESJ zip codes)	Utility Name	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026	% Cable Theft share (Q2-2026)	Four Quarters Total
Outages	AT&T California	98	112	174	95	-	479
	Frontier California Inc.	9	19	22	32	-	82
Total		107	131	196	127	-	561
Cable Theft	AT&T California	36	25	48	38	40%	147
	Frontier California Inc.	1	1	4	16	50%	22
Total		37	26	52	54	43%	169

Table 21 shows total outage and cable theft contacts for AT&T California and Frontier California, the two highest-volume telecommunications providers over the past four quarters. In Q2-2026, cable theft accounted for 34% of their combined outage contacts overall. However, cable theft accounted for a higher share of outages in ESJ ZIP codes, making up 43% of outage contacts (see Table 20), compared to the 34% overall average.

Table 21: AT&T and Frontier Total Outage Contacts and Outage Contacts Related to Cable Theft

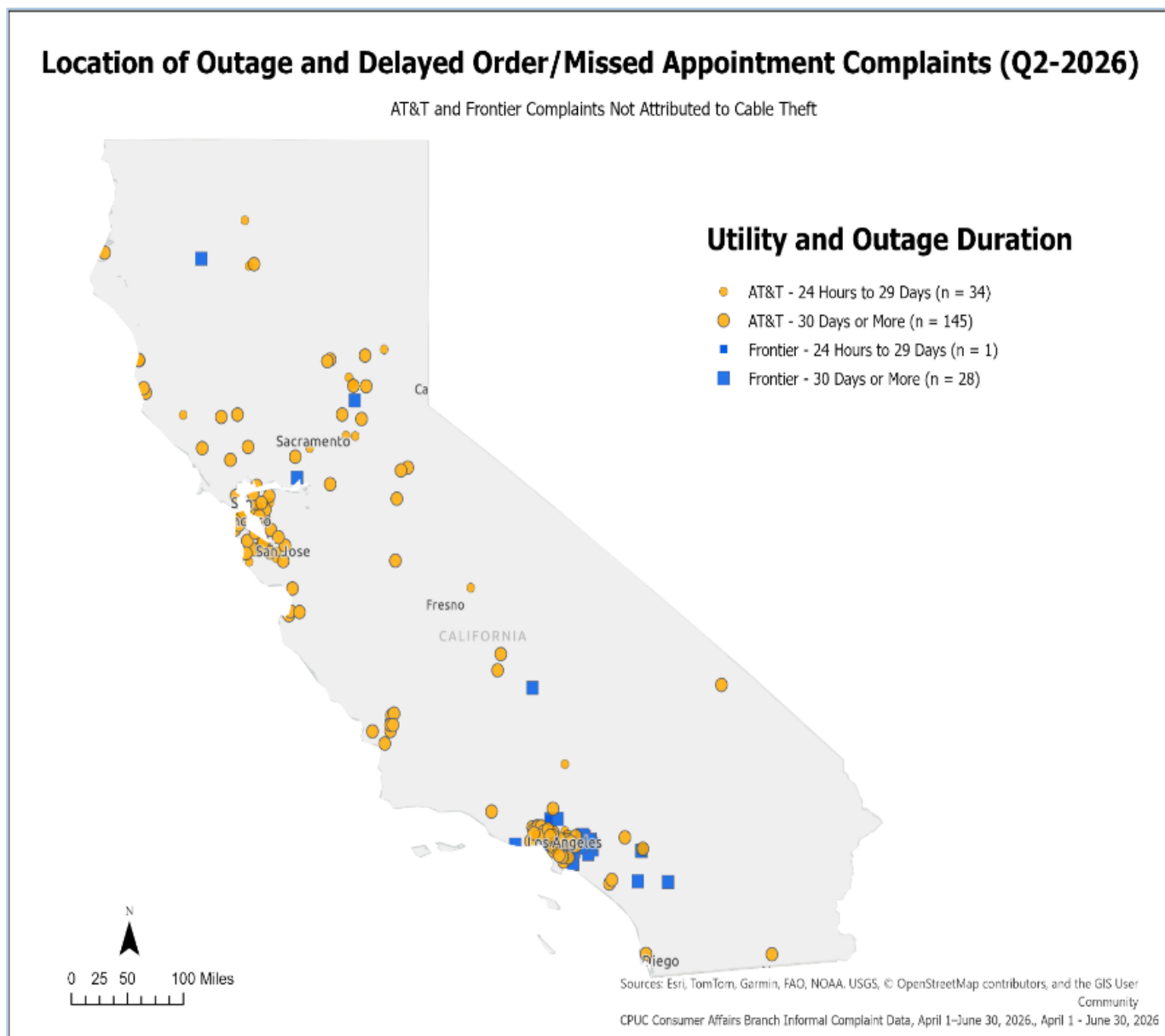
Utility Name	Contact Type	Q3-2025	Q4-2025	Q1-2026	Q2-2026	Q2-2026 Cable Theft Share	Four Quarters Total
AT&T California	Outage Contacts	204	325	502	325	-	1,356
	Cable Theft	58	75	76	106	33%	315
Frontier California, Inc.	Outage Contacts	53	55	93	100	-	301
	Cable Theft	12	8	19	37	37%	76
Total	Outage Contacts	257	380	595	425	-	1,657
	Cable Theft	70	83	95	143	34%	391

Outage and Delayed Order/Missed Appointment Complaints

Under CPUC General Order (GO) 133-E, telephone corporations must restore Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS) and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) outages within 24 hours, excluding service disruptions caused by cable theft or vandalism.

In Q2-2026, CAB referred 208 informal complaints to AT&T California and Frontier California regarding outages or restoration delays that were not caused by cable theft. Figure 7 maps these complaints, with markets indicating the utility provider's outage duration (ranging from 24 hours - 29 days or 30+ days). Complaints were primarily concentrated in the Bay Area and Los Angeles, with additional clusters in Northern California, the Central Valley, and the Santa Barbara area.

Figure 7: Location of Outage and Delayed Order/Missed Appointment Complaints (Q2-2026)



TEAM and CHANGES

Beyond managing customer contacts, CAB oversees two vital programs: the Telecommunications Education and Assistance in Multiple Languages ([TEAM](#)) and the Community Help and Awareness of Natural Gas and Electric Services ([CHANGES](#)). These programs assist Limited English Proficiency (LEP) consumers statewide with telecommunications and energy issues, respectively.

Services are delivered through 25 community-based organizations (CBOs) offering culturally sensitive assistance in consumers' preferred languages. Specifically, CHANGES CBOs support clients across three core components:

1. Individual Case Assistance: Helping consumers address financial challenges, manage bill payments, or resolve provider disputes.
2. Education: Hosting local classes on utility management on-site or at nearby community facilities.
3. Outreach: Promoting program resources at local events and through media channels.

The current TEAM and CHANGES contract was awarded to the International Institute of Los Angeles (IILA) for the period of July 2024 through June 2027.¹⁹ TEAM is authorized to receive an annual budget of up to \$1,600,000, and CHANGES is authorized for up to \$1,750,000 annually. Of the \$1,750,000 for CHANGES, \$1,680,000 directly funds the contract, with the remainder allocated for program evaluation as mandated by the 2021 CARE/FERA/ESA Decision ([D.21-06-015](#)).

The Top Issues for TEAM and CHANGES Clients

CHANGES

In Q2-2026, CHANGES community-based organizations (CBOs) successfully resolved 1,389 client cases, marking a 15% decrease from the prior quarter.

Table 22 shows that the 10 most common issue types accounted for 99% of all resolved cases during this period. The leading issues were consumers who were “Unable to Pay Balance Due (44%)” and those applying for “Needs Referral Assistance Programs (38%).” The third-most-reported issue was “High Bill,” which accounted for 6% of cases - a 1% increase from the prior quarter.

¹⁹ The full list of CBO's can be accessed here: [TEAM & CHANGES CBO Roster](#)

Table 22: CHANGES Client Issues (Q2-2026)

10 Most Common Case Issues		
Case Issue Type	Case Count	% of Total Top 10 Issues
Unable to Pay Balance Due	611	44%
Needs referral for assistance programs	530	38%
High Bill	85	6%
Other Payment Assistance (church, private company, etc.)	48	3%
Assist with Changes to Account	43	3%
Electric Aggregation	16	1%
Gas Aggregation	15	1%
Customer Service Problem	15	1%
New Account Set-Up	9	>1%
Pending Disconnection	5	>1%
Total	1,377	99%*

* Due to rounding, the percentages will not be exact

TEAM

During the reporting period, TEAM CBOs successfully closed 1,388 client cases - a 44% increase from the previous quarter. By resolving these telecommunications-related disputes, the program secured \$53,658 in consumer refunds.

Table 23 presents a detailed breakdown of the 10 most common issue types, which collectively accounted for 74% of all resolved TEAM cases. “High Bill” disputes comprised the largest share at 21%, consistent with the prior quarter. An uptick in unwanted calls led to 12% of clients requesting placement on the “Do Not Call List”, while “Cramming” accounted for another 12% of resolved cases. Additionally, 11% of consumers received assistance with “Changes to Account”. The remaining issues within the top 10 categories each accounted for 3% or less of the total cases.

Table 23: TEAM Client Issues (Q2-2026)

10 Most Common Case Issues		
Case Issue Type	Case Count	% of Total Top 10 Issues
High Bill	298	21%
Do Not Call List	170	12%
Cramming	164	12%
Assisted With Changes to Account	154	11%
Poor Coverage/Drop Calls/No Coverage	46	3%
LifeLine Phone Enrollment	46	3%
Lifeline Internet Enrollment	42	3%
Overbilling	37	3%
Add New Internet Service/Plan	37	3%
Set Up New Account	36	3%
Total	1,030	74%