

Empowering Communities Through Community Energy



Introducing the Alliance

The California Alliance for Community Energy brings together individuals and affiliated organizations committed to supporting and defending Community Choice and other community energy programs in California that advance local clean energy for the environmental, economic, and social justice benefit of our communities.

Our membership includes:

- Local, regional, or statewide Community Choice advocates
- Clean energy activists, community energy consultants, local government staff/officials, and others

Our Take on Community Energy

Since its founding in 2015, the Alliance has been a thought leader advocating for local energy resource development by and for the benefit of California communities. This has meant a steadfast commitment to a decentralized energy model: energy decision-making and investment by communities in developing energy resources that address their energy needs, strengthen their economies, provide jobs, address the climate crisis, improve health, and advance energy justice.

In our eight years as an Alliance, we have taken on many initiatives (see the attached Chronology of Alliance Campaigns and Positions):

- Advocating for strong standards for Community Choice energy programs
- Fighting back against the efforts of California’s investor-owned utilities (IOUs) and the California Public Utilities Commission to undermine Community Choice
- Fixing transmission access charges to benefit local energy generation
- Preventing the subordination of California energy policies to out-of-state fossil fuel and transmission interests
- Opposing ratepayer bailouts of the state’s monopoly utilities for their negligence and failures
- Opposing the dumping of nuclear energy on our communities
- Fighting monopoly utility attacks on rooftop solar and microgrid development in our communities.



In short, Alliance campaigns and positions have been at the forefront of efforts in California to empower our communities by promoting community energy initiatives that democratize and transform our local energy systems—that address climate change in a way that strengthens local economies, builds community resilience, advances energy justice. We also organize to support legislative or regulatory measures that advance these goals.

These initiatives are strengthened through monthly statewide conference calls of the 180 members of the Alliance and through active discussion of policies, programs, strategies, and practices on the Alliance’s email list serve.

Our Programmatic Priorities for 2023

The Alliance plans to build on its powerful track record to move community energy forward in 2023:

- **Visioning the decentralized energy model**
Collaborating with other community energy advocacy organizations and allies to create a more concrete vision of what the decentralized energy model looks like and the community benefits it would make possible, especially in contrast to the state's monopoly utilities' failed centralized energy model. Such a concrete vision would benefit activists and communities, already advocating for change, to do so with a more holistic picture of a just energy alternative.
- **Resources for community narrative building**
Supporting community-based organizations interested in developing information and narrative building campaigns, toolkits, knowledge sharing workshops and popular education materials. Serving as a resource hub to advance community energy advocacy, drawing on our broad membership base and relationships with other statewide advocacy organizations. Support would primarily involve providing technical expertise and other resources: background and analysis of the status quo in accessible terms for community based-organizations, current policy and program frameworks, and state decision-making and regulatory structures.

Our Values and Principles for Community Energy

The following values and principles are the basis of the practices for which we advocate:

1. Distributed Energy Resource (DER) Development:

Maximize development and integration of local renewable energy resources on both the customer-side and grid-side of the meter.

2. Economic and Workforce Development: Encourage new business development, workforce development, and family-sustaining careers by providing high standards of work, quality working conditions, union jobs, local hire, and career pathways.

3. Social Equity: Include programs and projects that prioritize benefits to low-income communities and communities that have been most impacted, economically and environmentally, by the fossil fuel economy.

4. Community Asset Ownership: Maximize development of community-owned (both private and collective) and publicly-owned local energy assets to give the community more control over the use of these assets.

5. Sustainability: Respect ecological integrity and the limited restorative capacity of the biosphere, while creating the environmental conditions needed to support present and future generations.

6. Community Engagement: Provide for all-inclusive community engagement in energy program decision-making, design, and implementation.

7. Build-out Planning: Achieve community environmental, economic, and social justice benefits through community-focused resource development planning.

8. Demand Reduction: Make aggressive energy demand reduction explicit in all build-out planning and implementation, including compensating developers in proportion to demand reduction performance.

9. Internal Technical Capability: Favor contractors who support community development on a fee-for-service basis and who strengthen the technical know-how of the community.

10. Innovative, Transparent Contracting: Employ a transparent, competitive solicitation process for hiring contractors to help launch and operate energy programs. The making of contracts should be free of any conflicts of interest and encourage competition and innovation.

11. Long-term Program Stability: Acquire utility-grade power service capabilities to support long-term stability in a rapidly changing energy market.

12. Regional Collaboration: Strive to collaborate with Community Choice and other community energy programs within the same region to develop common resources and economies of scale.

Chronology of Alliance Campaigns and Positions



Below is a chronology of the Alliance’s major campaigns and public positions since its formation in 2015. It does not include positions taken by the Alliance on many legislative bills over the years, but focuses instead on those issues most relevant to advocacy campaigns or projects taken up by the Alliance.

Year	Alliance Campaigns/Projects	Alliance Public Positions/Docs.
2015	Formation of California Alliance for Community Energy	
2016	Mostly Statewide Conference calls on Community Choice issues, such as the PCIA	March: <u>Letter to CPUC</u> “Sunset the Power Charge Indifference Adjustment (PCIA)”
2017	Fixing the Transmission Access Charge (TAC)—SB 692 Counteracting CPUC Bias against Community Choice Withdrawal of CPUC Resolution E-4907 (freezing establishment of Community Choice programs)	February: <u>Position on Transmission Access Charges</u> April: <u>CPUC Bias Favoring Monopoly Utilities Against Community Choice</u> May: <u>Key Values and Principles for Community Choice Programs</u> December: <u>Retract CPUC Resolution E-4907</u>
2018	Promoting Community Choice best practices <u>Opposing AB 813 – CAISO Regional Expansion</u> <u>Opposing CPUC’s Undermining of Community Choice (PCIA)</u>	January: <u>Guide to Creating State-of-the-Art Community Choice Programs</u> May: <u>Our Position on CAISO Regional Expansion</u> October: <u>Support the IOU Code of Conduct: No Roll Backs!</u> October: <u>Our Position on Peterman Alternate Proposed PCIA Decision</u>
2019	<u>Roll Back the CPUC Attack on Our Communities</u> (Feb-May). Alliance’s May 1 petition to Senate and Assembly leadership was signed by 49 organizations. PG&E bailout <u>Stop the Legislative Coup Against Community Choice!</u> (May-September)	February: <u>Backgrounder: Roll Back the CPUC Attack on Community Choice</u> February: <u>Legislative Remedies: “Community Choice Bill of Rights”</u> July: <u>Oppose AB 1054: Stop Newsom’s Gruesome Utility Bailout!</u> (Positions on many anti-Community Choice bills)

Year	Alliance Campaigns/Projects	Alliance Public Positions/Docs.
2020	<p>Continuing to push back on the PCIA attack</p> <p>Opposing the Dumping of Nuclear Energy on Community Choice agencies</p> <p>Advancing Community-Driven Energy Resilience</p> <p>Exposing the Back Story on the State’s Rolling Blackouts</p> <p>Calling for Sunsetting the PCIA</p>	<p>June: Amicus Brief in Support of Appeal to CA Supreme Court to Overthrow Peterman PCIA Decision.</p> <p>March: Fact Sheet: Keep Community Choice Nuclear-free!</p> <p>September: Community-Driven Energy Resilience</p> <p>November: Long Past the Time to Sunset the PCIA</p>
2021	<p>Fighting to Preserve and Expand Net Energy Metering (NEM): This is it. Local Solar Needs Us NOW!</p> <p>Advocating for expansion of “Community-Driven Energy Resilience”-- Microgrid Equity Coalition (MEC)</p> <p>Conceptualizing a campaign to “Empower Community Energy.”</p>	<p>June: Oppose AB 1139: The Utility Profit Grab</p> <p>October: Letter to CPUC “Don’t Undermine Solar Self-Generation!”</p> <p>October: The Avoided Cost Calculator and Why it Matters</p>
2022	<p>Continuing to resist the attack on rooftop solar.</p> <p>Advancing microgrid development through the Microgrid Equity Coalition (MEC)</p> <p>Taking steps to launch Empower Community Energy campaign</p> <p>Advancing Distributed Energy Resources for Our Communities (in CPUC High DER Future proceeding) through the Local Energy Equity Coalition (LEEC)</p>	<p>January: Newsom’s CPUC vs. the People of California</p> <p>March: Lead author of Energy Resilience and Microgrid Development in Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Communities</p> <p>May: Proposal in CPUC Proceeding R.21-06-017 Track 2 Distribution System Operator Roles and Responsibilities Community Stakeholder Engagement Process and Toward a High DER Future: A Community Stakeholder-Focused Alternate Proposal”</p>