

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 28, 2021

The Honorable Marybel Batjer, President
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHING A MORE EQUITABLE MINIMUM 1.5 PERCENT PROCUREMENT GOAL FOR
LGBTBE'S

Dear President Batjer:

I write to urge the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to effectively complete the work and goals of AB 1678 (Ch. 633, statutes of 2014) by adopting a 1.5 percent participation procurement goal for lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender business enterprises (LGBTBE'S) in the Utility Supplier Diversity Program (Program). Meeting this aspirational goal would put the LGBTBE community on more equal footing to the other groups in the Program and would help California continue to foster a more equitable and inclusive utility sector.

According to the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC), LGBTQ business contributions to the United States' economy exceed \$1.7 trillion. However, biases within some industry sectors still have many barriers to entry. AB 1678 was designed specifically to break down those barriers and foster inclusion within the utility sector.

The CPUC has previously established voluntary procurement goals for each covered utility of 15 percent for minority owned, 5 percent for woman-owned, and 1.5 percent for disabled veteran-owned businesses. Given the precedent established by the CPUC, it makes sense to mirror the 1.5 percent goal set for Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE's) nearly twenty years ago.

Supplier diversity initiatives across the state, and those like them around the nation, have already demonstrated that greater access to procurement opportunities leads to greater competition, which will lead to lower prices for the utility companies and ratepayers of California. I have every confidence that by implementing this initial 1.5 percent goal from LGBTBE'S, will create greater competition and empower greater participation by the LGBT business community.

Thank you for your continued leadership on matters of significant economic importance to California, as well as your commitment to inclusivity and equity. I strongly recommend that the CPUC join this broad coalition of partners and community leaders and help California continue to work towards a full commitment to equality by establishing a 1.5 percent procurement goal for the LGBTBE community.

ALEX PADILLA
CALIFORNIA

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Padilla". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "A" and "P".

Alex Padilla
United State Senator

cc: Martha Guzman Aceves, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission
Clifford Rechtschaffen, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission
Genevieve Shiroma, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission
Darcie L. Houck, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission