

SENATE THIRD READING

SB 647 (Hurtado)

As Amended September 02, 2025

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires the California Energy Commission (CEC) to establish a mechanism to notify applicants to the Equitable Building Decarbonization Program that they may also be eligible for building energy efficiency and decarbonization incentives authorized by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). Additionally, adds a 12th member, chosen by the executive director of the California CEC, to the Low-Income Oversight Board (LOIB).

Major Provisions**COMMENTS**

The Low-Income Oversight Board (LOIB). The LOIB is a legislatively established advisory body within the CPUC that represents the interests of low-income utility customers. Its responsibilities include advising on programs such as the California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) and Energy Savings Assistance (ESA), monitoring program effectiveness, and making recommendations on affordability and equity in energy and water services. LOIB is composed of representatives from community organizations, consumer advocates, investor-owned utilities, and state agencies, and serves as a platform for public input to ensure CPUC decisions reflect the needs of vulnerable households.

CEC: Equitable Building Decarbonization Program (EBD Program) – Established through AB 209 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 251, Statutes of 2022), the Equitable Building Decarbonization (EBD) program—overseen by the CEC—provides funding to help low-income households replace gas-fueled appliances with clean electric alternatives such as heat pump water heaters, space heating systems, and induction cooktops. To address barriers that often prevent participation in the clean energy transition, the program also supports pre-electrification upgrades (e.g., panel replacements), offers technical assistance, and funds community-based organizations to conduct outreach and engagement.

The EBD program is implemented through three subprograms: the Statewide Direct Install Program, which provides no-cost energy efficiency and electrification retrofits for low-income households; the Statewide Incentive Program, which reduces the cost of loans for home retrofits that improve efficiency and lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; and the Tribal Direct Install Program, which provides incentives for residential buildings owned or managed by a California Native American tribe.

According to the Author

According to the author, "SB 647, the Home Energy Savings Expansion Act, ensures California's clean energy future works for everyone, not just those who can already afford to upgrade. Too many hardworking families – our farmworkers, caregivers, teachers, and seniors – live in homes with outdated systems that drive up energy bills and worsen indoor air quality, especially in regions like the Central Valley where heat is extreme and incomes are limited. To address these

inequities, SB 647 strengthens oversight and coordination of state energy efficiency programs by expanding the Low-Income Oversight Board and requiring a comprehensive assessment of how current energy programs serve low- and moderate-income households while also identifying gaps and barriers so the legislature can begin to close them with more effective, targeted solutions. At its core, this bill tackles the structural barriers that prevent vulnerable Californians from benefiting fully from energy savings programs bringing fairness, transparency, and equity into California's energy transition, while providing necessary financial relief to those who are hurting the most."

Arguments in Support

A coalition of labor, environmental, and community advocates support this bill, noting that it will ensure low-income households receive comprehensive energy efficiency upgrades that lower utility costs and improve living conditions through better coordination of existing assistance programs.

San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) previously adopted a "support if amended" position, contending that the bill's proposed performance metrics were either duplicative or impractical to implement. They urged that the CPUC first evaluate existing reporting requirements and add only those metrics deemed necessary to improve program effectiveness. Recent amendments taken in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations remove the performance metrics language, so it is uncertain whether SDG&E and SoCalGas maintain the same position on the bill.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Committee on Appropriations, the costs to CEC should be minor and absorbable.

VOTES

SENATE FLOOR: 28-7-5

YES: Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Hurtado, Laird, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Umberg, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

NO: Alvarado-Gil, Choi, Dahle, Jones, Niello, Seyarto, Strickland

ABS, ABST OR NV: Grove, Limón, Ochoa Bogh, Reyes, Valladares

ASM UTILITIES AND ENERGY: 13-2-3

YES: Petrie-Norris, Boerner, Calderon, Davies, Mark González, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Kalra, Papan, Schiavo, Schultz, Zbur

NO: Patterson, Wallis

ABS, ABST OR NV: Chen, Rogers, Ta

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-3-1

YES: Wicks, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Ahrens, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache

NO: Sanchez, Dixon, Tangipa
ABS, ABST OR NV: Ta

UPDATED

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CONSULTANT: Lina V. Malova / U. & E. / (916) 319-2083

FN: 0001484