DRA

Division of Ratepayer Advocates
California Public Utilities Commission

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April 22, 2009

Honorable Sam Blakeslee
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 4117
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 51 (Blakeslee) Support

Dear Assemblymember Blakeslee:

The Division of Ratepayer Advocates (DRA) is the independent consumer advocacy division of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). DRA's statutory mandate is to obtain the lowest possible rate for utility service consistent with reliable and safe service levels. DRA also advocates for customer and environmental protections in connection with utility service.

DRA supports AB 51, which would require the investor-owned utilities (IOUs) that run California's over $2 billion Energy Efficiency (EE) programs to spend a minimum of 90% of program funds on implementation, not on "administrative, marketing, and outreach." DRA strongly supports the bill's effort to establish a reasonable limit on EE program administration. At the same time, we encourage you to go one step further and cap EE administration costs at 5% and also dedicate 2% or more of the remaining funds for marketing, education and outreach. Consumer outreach and education are vital to ensuring that program benefits reach the customers most in need.

DRA believes EE is one of the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly methods to reduce energy usage, lower consumers' monthly energy bills, and combat climate change, as long as the EE Programs are implemented efficiently and cost effectively. AB 51 would ensure EE Program benefits are maximized by requiring the IOUs to administer EE programs at the lowest cost to ratepayers.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please call DRA's Legislative Director Matthew Marcus, at (916) 327-3455 or me at (415) 703-2544.

Respectfully,

Dana S. Appling, Director
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