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May 14, 2021

The Honorable Scott Wiener
State Senator, 11th District
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 617 (Wiener) – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Wiener,

On behalf of the City of Cupertino, I am writing to express our support for SB 617, your measure that will implement an online, automated permitting platform that verifies code compliance and issues permits in real time to a licensed contractor for a solar energy system. Additionally, this measure will provide resources to local governments to support the implementation of instant online permitting for solar and storage installations.

Before any homeowner in Cupertino can install solar, they need to apply for a permit from the City. SB 617 will provide resources to help the City establish an online system that automates the review of standard residential solar systems to ensure they are up to code. A number of cities in California have already developed easy online permitting, and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory has created a tool, SolarAPP+, for this purpose.

The rapid growth of solar arrays from SB 617 will bring substantial benefits to Californians. Solar energy generates greenhouse gas-free electricity and lowers energy bills. Paired with storage, solar energy can keep the lights on and medical devices operating during planned and unplanned grid disruptions, and put electricity back into the larger grid during peak usage such as during extreme heat events.

This important legislation will help our state accelerate its urgently needed transition to clean energy and meet our climate emissions targets, which must be accelerated to be in alignment with the most recent climate science. SB 617 will also reduce the wait time for those looking to obtain a permit for a solar arrays or storage projects, thereby reducing costs and increasing the speed of installing solar throughout the state.

It is for these reasons that we support SB 617.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Darcy Paul". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the name.

Darcy Paul
Mayor
City of Cupertino

cc: Senator Dave Cortese
Assemblymember Evan Low
Assemblymember Marc Berman
Senate Appropriations Committee:
 Senator Anthony Portantino (Chair)
 Senator Patricia Bates (Vice Chair)
 Senator Steven Bradford
 Senator Brian Jones
 Senator Sydney Kamlager
 Senator John Laird
 Senator Bob Wieckowski