

***Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of Monterey County In Support of
Campaign to Increase Promotion and Enrollment in California's Low-Income
Rate Assistance Programs***

WHEREAS, electric and gas bills represent the second-highest living cost behind rent for residents of **Monterey County**. Nearly 70% of the 3.3 million low-income households in California are classified as energy insecure¹; and

WHEREAS, an energy burden is the percentage of income that is spent on energy bills. High energy burdens persist in low-income homes as a result of households allocating a disproportionate amount of their income on utility-related expenses; and

WHEREAS, Shelter-in-Place orders have resulted in higher residential energy bills due to more residents at home during the day; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to rising unemployment rates and a decrease in household income in every county of California. In **Monterey County**, the current unemployment rate is **8.8%**²; and

WHEREAS, a decrease in income in addition to an increase in home energy bills has perpetuated an already serious problem of energy insecurity for low-income households; and

WHEREAS, that California Public Utilities Commission instituted a moratorium that prohibits disconnections for non-payment until April 2021 for all residential households due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, while the moratorium pauses shutoffs due to nonpayment, those in arrears face the possibility of being shut off when the moratorium is lifted; and

WHEREAS, enrollment in low-income rate assistance programs such as Pacific Gas and Electric Company's California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE), Family Electric Rate Assistance Program (FERA) and Medical Baseline are crucial now more than ever; and

WHEREAS, Pacific Gas and Electric Company's CARE, FERA, and Medical Baseline Allowance programs provide eligible customers 18% to 30% monthly discounts on home energy bills; and

WHEREAS, while income qualified households may also apply for one-time financial assistance through federally funded Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), funds are very limited. Similar to other LIHEAP Service Providers in California, Central Coast Energy Services is only able to help less than 6% of eligible households each year with available LIHEAP funding; and

WHEREAS, California's rate assistance programs are under-enrolled. Enrollment in these programs would advance true energy equity in needy communities; and

¹https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/uploadedFiles/CPUCWebsite/Content/UtilitiesIndustries/Energy/EnergyPrograms/Infrastructure/DC/TURN_EnergyInsecurityFactSheet.pdf

² <https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/saliSpds.pdf>

WHEREAS, previously Pacific Gas and Electric Company had the second highest shutoff rate in comparison to other utility companies in California. **Residents of Monterey County** reside in Pacific Gas and Electric Company's service territory; and

WHEREAS, low-income households are at higher risk of shutoffs for non-payment. In 2019, **5,627** households in all of **Monterey County** were disconnected for non-payment³. This is compared to 91,667 low-income households being shutoff in all Pacific Gas and Electric Company's service territory; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, 42% of all disconnected households experienced more than one utility disconnection in the same year; and

WHEREAS, utility shutoffs have negative impacts on hunger, childhood development, respiratory illnesses, stress levels, chronic illnesses, and increased heat and fire risks⁴; and

WHEREAS, Central Coast Energy Services advocates for low-income households to apply for low-income rate assistance programs offered by Pacific Gas and Electric Company and is supported by many partners to prevent utility disconnections and minimize economic hardships;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the **Monterey Board of Supervisors** support organizations serving those in need by actively encouraging county official's designated low-income constituents to apply for Pacific Gas and Electric Company's low-income rate assistance programs such as California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE), Family Electric Rate Assistance Program (FERA), and/or Medical Baseline Allowance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board of supervisors and low-income customers be encouraged to contact Central Coast Energy Services with any questions or concerns regarding these low-income rate assistance programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to city council members and other social service organizations working with low-income populations to bring awareness to Pacific Gas and Electric Company's California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE), Family Electric Rate Assistance Program (FERA), and Medical Baseline Allowance programs.

ADOPTED [effective date] by the Board of Supervisors of Monterey County

Signed: _____

Title: _____

³ Pacific Gas & Electric Company's (PG&E) Aggregate Monthly Disconnection Data Report filed with the California Public Utilities Commission (January 2020).

⁴ http://www.turn.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018_TURN_Shut-Off-Report_FINAL.pdf



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Osmer".

Dennis Osmer, Executive Director
Central Coast Energy Services
135 Aviation Way, Suite 7
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa Sullivan".

Teresa Sullivan, Executive Director
Alliance on Aging, Monterey County
247 Main Street
Salinas, CA 93901



[Digitally Signed]

Lauren C. Suwansupa, Director
Community Action Partnership, Monterey County
1000 S. Main Street, Ste. 211-C
Salinas, CA 93901



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judith Cabrera".

Judith Cabrera, Executive Director
Central Coast Center for Independent Living
318 Cayuga Street, Suite 208
Salinas, CA 93901



United Way
Monterey County

[Digitally Signed]
Katy Castagna, President and CEO
United Way, Monterey County
60 Garden Court, Suite 350
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[Digitally Signed]
Kurt Schake, Executive Director
Veterans Transition Center
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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John O'Brien".

John O'Brien, CEO/President
Central Coast Senior Services, Inc.
22 Lower Ragsdale Drive, Suite E
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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ana Ventura Phares".

Ana Ventura Phares, Executive Director
Catholic Charities, Monterey County
922 Hilby Ave., Ste C
Seaside, CA 93955



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bennett", written over a light yellow rectangular background.

John Bennett Major, Corps Officer
The Salvation Army Monterey Peninsula
1491 Contra Costa St. Seaside, CA 93955