



# RISING SUN ENERGY CENTER

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California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC)  
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## **Comments of Rising Sun Energy Center on the Draft IOU Standard and Negotiable Contract Terms**

### ***Background***

Rising Sun Energy Center is a nonprofit workforce development organization serving Bay Area and San Joaquin County residents, with a focus on low-income, disadvantaged, and hard-to-reach communities. Rising Sun's California Youth Energy Services (CYES) program has provided residential direct install services via PG&E's local government partnerships since 2006, and currently serves five Energy Watch Partnerships. Rising Sun's Green Energy Training Services (GETS) program offers pre-apprenticeship training and solar installation training to low-income adults experiencing barriers to employment.

### ***Comments***

Rising Sun appreciates the opportunity to provide input on the draft contract terms, and also acknowledges that what was proposed is a starting point for conversation. With that in mind, we submit the following comments for consideration:

### **Standard Contract Terms**

- *B.2. Background Checks:* Rising Sun joins the concerns raised by several CAEECC members at the 2/15/18 CAEECC meeting regarding the unnecessary stringency of the proposed background check requirements. As currently written, these background checks have the potential to disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color. Rising Sun has precedent in working with PG&E on an exemption to these requirements, balanced by additional QA/QC and safety measures, for its youth employment and residential direct install program (CYES).
- *D.1. Termination for Convenience:* This section puts undue risk on the implementer in an environment that can be highly unpredictable. Given that the solicitation process is already likely to strongly favor larger, for-profit firms that can take on greater risk than community-based organizations and small businesses, Rising Sun recommends reconsideration of this clause, or, at minimum, an extension of the 10 days' notice to a more reasonable 30 days.

### **Negotiable Contract Terms**

- *Disadvantaged Worker Definition:* Rising Sun agrees with several CAEECC members who expressed that the proposed definition is too narrow. We would agree with the definitions proposed by the Coalition for Energy Efficiency’s proposal and by the National Resources Defense Council as more accurate and inclusive, yet still operational. In particular, we appreciate the inclusion of “barriers to employment” as part of the definition, as well as the inclusion of low-income residents who may not reside within a Disadvantaged Community as defined by CalEnviroScreen.
- *1. Workforce Qualifications and Quality Installation Requirements:* While Rising Sun acknowledges the need to ensure quality work, we’re encouraged to hear that the certifications provided in the sample table are for illustrative purposes only. For example, a BPI certification is simply not necessary for most residential direct install work, and requiring that certification would create a workforce barrier. We support the use of equivalencies to certifications/experience requirements, when appropriate, to create a more even playing field. Rising Sun also supports the employment of skilled union labor and strong labor standards, as well as opportunities for the next generation of skilled workers that result from an increase in market share of construction work for union tradespeople.
- *A.2. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):* To ensure that hard-to-reach residents are not left out of a performance-based program model, Rising Sun would encourage the IOUs to monetize certain KPIs for performance-based contracting and reimbursement. For instance, Rising Sun supports the inclusion of categories such as hiring of disadvantaged workers, jobs created, low-income households served, etc., in the KPI minimum standards.

In general, Rising Sun recommends that the IOU team refer to the California Energy Commission’s *SB 350 Low-Income Barriers Study, Part A: Overcoming Barriers to Energy Efficiency and Renewables for Low-Income Customers and Small Business Contracting Opportunities in Disadvantaged Communities* and its recommendations as further guidance in this process.

Rising Sun thanks the CAEECC and the IOUs for the recommendations proposed and for the opportunity to comment and engage in this process.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jodi Pincus  
Executive Director  
Rising Sun Energy Center

/s/ Julia Hatton  
Director of Programs  
Rising Sun Energy Center