



July 26, 2020

Senate Pro Tem Toni Atkins
 State Capitol
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: OPPOSE AB 1720 (Carrillo) “Eagle Crest Bailout” – Gut and Amend Should Not Be Considered

Pro Tem Atkins,

As the Legislature moves forward in the remaining weeks of this difficult, unusual legislative year, we support the focus on protecting public health, budget solvency, housing, homelessness, economic recovery and combating systemic racism. California has many strengths and areas of agreement to build on as we work together to stimulate our economy, protect public health and advance racial justice. As part of its work, the Legislature must avoid making the cost-of-living and affordability problem worse for residents.

Therefore, it is imperative that the Legislature not consider AB 1720 (Carrillo), a recent gut-and-amend to advance a multi-billion dollar ratepayer-funded bailout of the proposed Eagle Crest Pumped Storage Project next to Joshua Tree National Park.

Through four bills over the past three years, the Florida-based NextEra Corporation has attempted to pass controversial legislation to force procurement of its project since it has failed to compete in the open marketplace and state regulators have not identified a need for it. **Each Eagle Crest Bailout bill has failed to pass a chamber, including two opportunities earlier this year under regular order.**

AB 1720 is NextEra’s latest attempt and **3rd this year**, this time proposing a new, complex framework to achieve a ratepayer-funded bailout for Eagle Crest. This bill seeks to bypass the California Public Utilities Commission’s (CPUC) mandated energy planning process to advance the floundering pumped storage project that has been discarded due to its unsupportable high costs to ratepayers. The bill authorizes the Department of Water Resources to be a pumped storage procurement agency that operates outside of the transparent, fact-based California Public Utilities Commission Integrated Resources Plan. The bill authorizes the DWR to sell power from the project to the California Independent System Operator, spreading costs to ratepayers across California.

At a time when utilities are reporting extremely high rates of non-payments by ratepayers due to economic hardship, now is not the time to consider hastily written legislation, gut-and-amended after two failures during regular order, that will introduce billions of dollars in new, unnecessary costs to Californians.

Thank you for your leadership to keep Californians safe and healthy.

Michael Boccadoro
Agricultural Energy Consumers Association

Pam Flick
Defenders of Wildlife

Sean MacNeil
California Community Choice Association

Ed LaRue
Desert Tortoise Council

Trudi Hughes
California League of Food Producers

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Kelly Catlett
California Hydropower Reform Coalition

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Audra Hartmann
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Independent Energy Producers Association

Melissa Romero
California League of Conservation Voters

Shannon Eddy
Large-Scale Solar Association

Nick Jensen
California Native Plant Society

Geary Hund
Mojave Desert Land Trust

Chris Shutes
California Sportfishing Protection Alliance

Steve Bardwell
Morongo Basin Conservation Association

Ryan Henson
California Wilderness Coalition

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National Parks Conservation Association

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Native American Land Conservancy

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Coalition to Protect America's National Parks

Matthew Baker
Planning and Conservation League

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Kate Hoit
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