



August 30, 2024

Honorable Bill Dodd  
California State Senate  
1021 O Street, Suite 7610  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 1003 (Dodd) – Support**

Dear Senator Dodd:

The Public Advocates Office is the independent consumer advocate at the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). We advocate for affordable, safe, and reliable utility services consistent with the state's climate and clean energy goals.

We support SB 1003, as amended, because it will align the utilities' Wildfire Mitigation Plans with the utilities' broader safety risk assessments and overall budgets, which will enhance safety and lead to better informed decisions regarding the utilities' costs.

Specifically, SB 1003:

- 1) Aligns utilities' Wildfire Mitigation Plans, which they file at the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety, with the Risk Assessments of all aspects of utility safety, which they file at the CPUC. This alignment ensures that while wildfire mitigation is prioritized, it is also considered in the broader context of other critical safety risks foreseen by the utilities.
- 2) Synchronizes the timelines for the Wildfire Mitigation Plans with the General Rate Case process, allowing for a direct comparison of wildfire mitigation costs with all other utility expenditures. This change in timing means that the CPUC can approve funding levels based on a more comprehensive set of facts and information, enhancing ratepayer protections.
- 3) Expands the role of the excellent work of the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety in conducting field audits and performance assessments, leveraging their expertise to enhance the efficacy of utility operations funded by ratepayers.
- 4) Mandates that utilities incorporate the speed of implementation as a criterion in their Wildfire Mitigation Plans. This requirement will help accurately weigh the benefits of effective and fast-to-implement mitigations such as covered conductor and fast trip technologies.

Overall, SB 1003 will substantially improve the oversight of the state's wildfire mitigation efforts and improve ratepayer protections, ensuring a safer and more affordable electrical system for Californians.

Sincerely,

Linda Serizawa  
Interim Director