



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

April 20, 2023

The Honorable Laura Friedman
Member, California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5740
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 914 – SUPPORT
As Amended April 10, 2023**

Dear Assembly Member Friedman:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we support your Assembly Bill 914, regarding the California Environmental Quality Act. RCRC is an association of forty rural California counties and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each of those member counties.

Assembly Bill 914 creates two CEQA exemptions. The first exemption is for expansion or upgrade of existing electrical substations and powerlines within an existing right of way. The second exemption is for the construction of a new electrical substation or lines within two miles of an actual or forecasted demand increase associated with transportation electrification or building electrification, or a distribute energy, storage, or renewable generation project. AB 914 also sets clear expectations for the state to complete environmental reviews of electrical infrastructure projects that are not otherwise covered by these two exemptions.

Many of our local governments have been told it will take anywhere from 2-7 years to improve utility distribution systems to provide additional capacity to support normal growth, building/vehicle electrification, and facilitate economic development. These excessive delays have resulted in lost opportunities for transformative economic development; inhibit local ability to increase desperately needed local housing stocks; frustrate efforts to install electric vehicle charging systems; and will stymie the state's efforts to decarbonize existing residential and commercial buildings. While these problems have gotten worse recently, they are much longer-term issues in many areas. California and its electrical utilities need to rapidly increase system capacity to meet the state's pressing housing and economic development needs and the looming need to increase power available for vehicle and building electrification efforts. AB 914 will importantly reduce CEQA and CEQA litigation-related delays for these much-needed electrical infrastructure projects.

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For these reasons, RCRC supports your AB 914. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jkennedy@rcrcnet.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "J" and "K".

JOHN KENNEDY
Policy Advocate

cc: The Honorable Luz Rivas, Chair, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Lawrence Lingbloom, Chief Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Casey Dunn, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Laura Shybut, Chief Consultant, Assembly Energy and Utilities Committee
Greg Melkonian, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus