

Renewable Energy Projects

Issue: Riverside County supports renewable energy projects. These projects, however, will result in the loss of economic development potential (including lost employment opportunities and lost property tax revenue), lost recreation potential, lost historical resources and the unreimbursed costs of additional transportation facilities, public safety facilities and related services. Without appropriate ways to reduce these losses, Riverside County will bear a disproportionately heavy burden for renewable energy production, because it is uniquely suited for the location of renewable energy projects.

Action: 1. Support maintaining local land use control over the various types of renewable energy projects and oppose efforts (regulatory or legislative) that would usurp local control and transfer land use authority to the state.

Action: 2. Support an amendment to Section 73 of the Revenue and Taxation Code clarifying that the property tax exclusion for newly constructed active solar energy systems applies only to active solar energy systems generating energy primarily for on-site consumption and does not apply to solar power plants generating energy primarily for off-site consumption.

Background: The property tax exclusion for newly constructed active solar energy systems is based on and authorized by Proposition 7 adopted by voters on November 4, 1980. As explained in the ballot analysis and arguments, the exclusion is limited to systems which enable a residential, commercial or industrial use to reduce its on-site consumption of electricity. The exclusion does not extend to solar power plants, which generate electricity primarily for off-site consumption. The above-referenced amendment would ensure that the intent of the voters is properly followed.