



COUNTY OF SISKIYOU

Board of Supervisors

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July 1, 2025

The Honorable Chris Rogers
Member, California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Room 5130
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 531 – OPPOSE
As Introduced February 11, 2025**

Dear Assembly Member Rogers:

On behalf of the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors, I must respectfully oppose Assembly Bill 531, which expands the California Energy Commission's (CEC) AB 205 opt-in permitting process.

Assembly Bill 531 extends the CEC's AB 205 opt-in permitting process to include geothermal powerplants and geothermal field development projects. These projects are currently subject to local discretionary permitting authority. As written, AB 531 overrides local permitting authority on geothermal energy projects and allows the project developer to give that authority to the CEC.

Local governments are entrusted with authority over local land use decisions and permitting. Unfortunately, the AB 205 process usurps that authority by allowing the CEC to issue permits even over local objections. Local governments are best suited to make these decisions because they know the communities impacted, are tasked with balancing competing land use, and are situated closest to those residents and communities that will be impacted by the projects. In the local permitting process, local decision makers can identify and compel mitigation of the project's impacts on the affected community. AB 531 takes these crucial responsibilities away from local governments and hands them to the CEC, which is far removed from being held accountable by impacted residents. That process also allows the CEC to bypass local standards, ordinances, and laws.

While we strongly object to proposals that allow developers to bypass local permit processes, we believe there is a way to ensure that geothermal projects going through the CEC's AB 205 opt-in permitting process enjoy the support of the jurisdiction in which the project will be located. We have no objections to allowing projects to access the CEC's AB 205 process if the project receives a letter of support from the local government where the facility will be located. This prerequisite will ensure that the project is supported by the host jurisdiction and that the developer will work collaboratively with that jurisdiction on any impacts that may result. We suggest the following amendments to Public Resources Code Section 25545(b)(7):

Jess Harris
District 1

Ed Valenzuela
District 2

Michael N. Kobseff
District 3

Nancy Ogren
District 4

Ray Haupt
District 5

*(7) A geothermal powerplant or a geothermal field development project, as defined in Section 65928.5 of the Government Code, **that received a letter of support adopted at a public meeting by the governing body of the local government in which jurisdiction the facility will be located.***

If these amendments are adopted, the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors would be pleased to withdraw our opposition and support the bill. Until then, we must respectfully oppose Assembly Bill 531.

Sincerely,

Nancy Ogren
Chair, Board of Supervisors

CC: Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange
Assemblywoman Heather Hadwick
Senator Megan Dahle
California State Association of Counties
Rural County Representatives of California
The Honorable Diane Papan, Member of the California State Assembly
The Honorable Josh Becker, Chair, Senate Energy, Utilities, and Communications Committee
Members of the Senate Energy, Utilities, and Communications Committee
Nidia Bautista, Consultant, Senate Energy, Utilities, and Communications Committee
Kerry Yoshida, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus