



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

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February 8, 2011

Michael R. Peevey, President  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for AB 37**

Dear President Peevey,

I am writing to you to express our Board's concerns with the lack of options being provided for those PG&E customers who do not wish to have wireless Smart Meters installed at their homes.

This letter is prompted after hearing numerous complaints from concerned citizens from all around Humboldt County. These residents have expressed concerns with the potential health impacts of radio frequency (RF) emissions from Smart Meters, as well as concerns about possible impacts on personal privacy.

We have read with interest the recent study by the California Council on Science and Technology, and while we appreciate the report's conclusions regarding the thermal effects from Smart Meters, we note that it recommends further studies and monitoring regarding the potential non-thermal health effects. The report further recommends that more complete information regarding RF emissions be made available to consumers to allow them to make better-informed decisions.

Our Board takes no position on these potential health effects, nor do we believe that conclusive evidence of such effects should be necessary before allowing consumers the alternative of a hard-wired Smart Meter.

Assemblyman Jared Huffman has authored a bill, AB 37, which would require the CPUC to identify options for customers who decline the installation of wireless smart meters and to require PG&E to make those alternatives available. The bill would also require the CPUC to provide information to customers about RF emissions from smart meters, and would suspend the deployment of Smart Meters until the CPUC has complied with the above requirements.

Our Board supports AB 37, as we believe that consumers who are concerned about possible health or privacy issues from wireless Smart Meters should be given the option of wired meters or traditional mechanical meters. We believe these consumers should be allowed to defer installation until such time as an alternative is available. We also support the inclusion of language in AB 37 that would allow those consumers who have already had Smart Meters installed against, or without, their will to have them replaced with an alternative.

It is our understanding that PG&E is currently allowing those customers who are concerned about Smart Meters to be placed "at the back of the line," deferring their installation until some unspecified later date. However, we have also heard unconfirmed reports that some customers displaying "No Smart Meter" signs have had the new meters installed against their wishes. We request that PG&E provide us with their assurance that they and their contractors will honor these signs.

We further request that PG&E provide a date-certain for any delayed installations of no sooner than January 1, 2012, giving those customers the assurance that any installation will be deferred until after the fate of AB 37 is known and, in the case of passage, giving them the options and protections provided by the bill.

In conclusion, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors supports AB 37, and we ask our legislators to work for its passage. We encourage the CPUC and PG&E to respect customers' concerns by working together in advance of AB 37 to provide alternative options to wireless Smart Meters.

Sincerely,

Mark Lovelace, Chair  
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

Cc:

Assemblyman Jared Huffman  
Assemblyman Wes Chesbro  
Senator Noreen Evans  
Pacific Gas & Electric Company