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August 26, 2014

The Honorable Edmund “Jerry” Brown, Governor
State of California
State Capitol Building, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **AB 2188 (Muratsuchi) Solar Permits (as amended August 14, 2014)**
REQUEST FOR VETO

The League of California Cities is writing to request a veto on AB 2188 (Muratsuchi), which would, among other things, require cities and counties to adopt a new, costly ordinance that would essentially create a separate and unequal permitting and inspection process specifically for residential solar installations of less than 10 kilowatts.

Cities are supportive of expanding access to renewable energy resources, including residential solar, and respect the policy objective of this bill in seeking to streamline the permitting process, however, the League of California Cities continues to oppose AB 2188 because the bill remains severely flawed.

The approach taken by AB 2188 imposes sweeping requirements on cities that fails to recognize local practical and economic realities. Solar technology is wonderful, but not affordable to many struggling families. The League of California Cities opposes AB 2188 because it:

- ***Imposes costly requirements on struggling cities*** – Under the bill, every city - no matter what their economic circumstances - must create a new, costly ordinance to establish an expedited, streamlined permitting and inspection process for residential solar installations ***regardless of the demand for solar products in the community.*** Many cities continue to experience double digit unemployment and deep cuts to important community services. AB 2188 would only exacerbate this problem by forcing cities to sideline other more pressing issues in order to develop an ordinance and special permit checklist for solar systems.
- ***Establishes costly electronic submittal process*** – The vast majority of local governments currently lack the ability to accept permit applications over the internet or via email. Still, AB 2188 ignores technological and funding shortcomings at the local level and forces cities to invest limited resources to comply with an unwanted mandate when their residents lack other more essential services.
- ***Establishes a bad precedent for tiered levels of public service***– AB 2188 requires cities to provide a level of service to solar permit applicants currently unavailable to nearly all other individuals seeking a building permit. While unintentional, in effect AB 2188 would compel local agencies with scarce resources to favor affluent solar system purchasers over all other permit seekers. This is a bad precedent and departs from longstanding efforts by local governments to treat all applicants equally regardless of permit type or income.

If you have any questions regarding the League’s position, please contact me at (916) 658-8264.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Rhine".

Jason Rhine
Legislative Representative

cc: Gareth Elliott, Legislative Secretary
Camille Wagner, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary