

August 3, 2023

Brad Paul  
Deputy Executive Director  
Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)

**RE: Next-Generation Solid-State Battery Technology Innovation Hub--SUPPORT**

Dear Mr. Paul,

As Chair of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, I write to share our support for ABAG's proposal to the U.S. Economic Development Administration's 2023 Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program for \$400,000 to develop a strategy for establishing a Next-Generation Solid-State Battery Technology Innovation Hub (NSBT-Hub) in the Bay Area.

The Northern Waterfront Economic Development Initiative is a regional cluster-based economic development strategy with a goal of creating 18,000 new jobs in Contra Costa County by 2035. The Initiative leverages existing competitive advantages and assets by focusing on five targeted clusters: advanced manufacturing, advanced transportation technology, biomedical/biotech, agriculture technology and food processing, and clean technology. It was created to revitalize the northern waterfront of Contra Costa County stretching along San Pablo Bay, the Carquinez Strait, and into the Delta. In January 2019, a Strategic Action Plan was approved by the County Board of Supervisors to enhance the economic vitality of the northern waterfront region by creating more good jobs closer to home, reducing congestion and emissions, and making communities more vibrant. The hallmark of the Northern Waterfront Economic Development initiative is a collaboration among the County and seven partner cities.

A global technology hub for research, testing, prototyping, and manufacturing next-generation energy storage solutions, combined with wrap-around services and training programs for our communities, will build on our region's strength to help realize our local economic development goals while also accelerating the pressing need for decarbonizing the global economy.

We firmly believe that finding feasible alternatives to current energy storage technology, which has limitations as described in the proposal, is critical to transportation electrification, electric grid stabilization, reinvestment in underutilized industrial assets and a "just transition" of our regional economy away from the fossil fuel industry. As the State of California adopts policies and goals for reducing pollution and addressing climate change, Contra Costa County is updating its Climate Action Plan, which will provide strategic implementation programs to show how the County will reduce GHG emissions in support of the State's adopted reduction targets for 2030 and 2050, reducing GHG emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, with consideration of the State's long-term goal to reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

We believe that the proposed NSBT-Hub will help align and consolidate dispersed initiatives in next-generation energy storage technologies, in both the private and academic fields, across the Northern California mega-region into a viable, sustainable, and globally competitive research, development and manufacturing cluster. We see this as an opportunity to grow middle-wage jobs that provide economic opportunities to workers in our communities without a college degree. We also see the need to support advanced manufacturing operations as a key strategy to grow existing high-tech

industries that are increasingly looking to co-locate research with prototyping and commercialization operations. From a local, regional and national perspective, this is the most viable path to onshoring essential manufacturing and supply chain activities that are critical to our security and climate goals.

The Bay Area economy holds immense potential for global competitiveness in the rapidly evolving next-generation battery and energy storage technologies. The proposed NSBT-Hub in the Bay Area will benefit from a large complex of world-class research and innovation centers, including research universities, community colleges and vocational programs, national research laboratories, venture and growth capital, a vibrant start-up and entrepreneurship community, incubators and accelerators, and innovation headquarters of global corporations. The same innovation ecosystem that propelled the Bay Area's infotech and biotech industries to become globally competitive is ripe to be harnessed by the creation of an innovation ecosystem for energy storage. The NSBT-Hub proposes to combine this culture of innovation with a focused approach to scale innovation by co-locating manufacturing with the scientific capacity for advanced battery and new-generation storage solutions.

We strongly urge EDA to fund this proposal. Contra Costa County is committed to participating in this process to develop a robust strategic plan, which will be based on an assessment of regional capacity, critical partnerships, and policy and implementation barriers. It will prepare the region for the implementation phase of our collective vision to establish a globally competitive next-generation solid-state energy storage technologies that supports domestic manufacturing and several high-priority local and regional economic and climate goals.

Respectfully,

JOHN GIOIA  
Chair, Board of Supervisors