

Assembly Bill No. 2161

CHAPTER 250

An act to amend Section 25619 of the Public Resources Code, relating to energy.

[Approved by Governor September 7, 2012. Filed with Secretary of State September 7, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2161, Achadjian. Energy: renewable energy resources.

Existing law requires the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission to provide up to \$7,000,000 in grants to qualified counties for the development or revision of rules and policies that facilitate the development of eligible renewable energy resources, and their associated electric transmission facilities, and the processing of permits for eligible renewable energy resources.

This bill would additionally include the County of San Luis Obispo as a qualified county to receive the above grants.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 25619 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

25619. (a) For purposes of this section, "qualified counties" means the Counties of Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Merced, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Stanislaus, and Tulare.

(b) The commission shall provide up to seven million dollars (\$7,000,000) in grants to qualified counties for the development or revision of rules and policies, including, but not limited to, general plan elements, zoning ordinances, and a natural community conservation plan as a plan participant, that facilitate the development of eligible renewable energy resources, and their associated electric transmission facilities, and the processing of permits for eligible renewable energy resources. The commission may allocate not more than 1 percent of appropriated funds to provide training to county planning staff to facilitate the siting and permitting of eligible renewable energy resources. A general plan element or zoning ordinance that is adopted or revised pursuant to this section shall be completed within two years of receipt of the grant and shall be consistent with the conservation strategies of any natural community conservation plan if one has been approved, or is under development, pursuant to the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 2800) of Division 3

of the Fish and Game Code). For counties within the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan planning area, the commission shall not award a grant to a county that is not a “plan participant,” as defined by paragraph (1) of subdivision (j) of Section 2805 of the Fish and Game Code, in the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan.

(c) In its initial round of grant funding, the commission shall establish a preference for a grant to a qualified county in an amount that is adequate to develop a renewable energy element in its general plan that will facilitate the development and siting of eligible renewable energy resources that utilize multiple renewable energy technologies. The commission shall also establish a preference for a grant for those counties that have experience in geothermal energy development and have adopted a geothermal element, as defined in Section 25133, to its general plan.

(d) The commission shall only implement this section upon receiving a specific appropriation for the purposes of this section by the Legislature from the Renewable Resources Trust Fund or other funds from the Energy Resources Program Account.