

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 2630**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Salas**

February 19, 2016

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An act to add Section 399.23 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to electricity.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2630, as introduced, Salas. San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy and Jobs Act.

Existing law, the Public Utilities Act, establishes the Independent System Operator to ensure the efficient use and reliable operation of the electric transmission grid. The Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015 establishes a target of 50% for the amount of electricity generated and sold to retail customers per year from eligible renewable energy resources, to be achieved by December 31, 2030.

This bill would require the Public Utilities Commission and the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission to evaluate potential renewable energy projects on least-conflict lands in the San Joaquin Valley, as specified, and, on or before January 31, 2017, using that evaluation, to recommend to the Independent System Operator an amount of renewable energy production in the San Joaquin Valley that reasonably maximizes, consistent with the state's overall need for renewable energy, the use of least-conflict lands as identified by the San Joaquin Valley Solar Convening.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

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

1 SECTION 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the  
2 San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy and Jobs Act.

3 SEC. 2. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

4 (a) The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006  
5 (Division 25.5 (commencing with Section 38500) of the Health  
6 and Safety Code) established a policy to reduce emissions of  
7 greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by 2020 and to continue reductions  
8 of emissions of greenhouse gases beyond 2020.

9 (b) The Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015  
10 (Chapter 547 of the Statutes of 2015) established further clean  
11 energy policies to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and  
12 expand renewable energy to at least 50 percent of total retail sales  
13 of electricity in California by December 31, 2030.

14 (c) The San Joaquin Valley remains mired in chronic double  
15 digit unemployment, unprecedented rates of poverty, a severe  
16 ongoing drought, and poor air quality.

17 (d) California’s energy sector is undergoing significant  
18 advancement and transformation driven by evolving regulation,  
19 expanding renewable energy goals, and increasing greenhouse gas  
20 emissions reduction efforts.

21 (e) While rich in natural resources and clean energy  
22 opportunities, the San Joaquin Valley has largely been left behind  
23 in California’s clean energy revolution. The overwhelming majority  
24 of the state’s new transmission assets have been sited in other  
25 regions, particularly southern California, and renewable energy  
26 investment, jobs, and economic and environmental benefits have  
27 followed grid access.

28 (f) Unlocking the renewable energy potential of the San Joaquin  
29 Valley by providing more equitable investment in a clean energy  
30 economy should be a key priority of California policymakers.

31 (g) Timely investment and improved transmission access are  
32 critical to the San Joaquin Valley and will allow the region to more  
33 effectively and efficiently develop clean energy opportunities,  
34 create jobs, and derive cobenefits for disadvantaged communities.

35 (h) The Governor’s office is nearing completion of the San  
36 Joaquin Valley Solar Convening to identify high potential  
37 least-conflict lands for solar energy development in the San Joaquin

1 Valley that maximize renewable energy benefits and minimize  
2 environmental biological and habitat impacts.

3 (i) Development of renewable energy projects on least-conflict  
4 lands will provide for the economically viable and environmentally  
5 beneficial reuse of physically impaired agricultural soils, facilitate  
6 solutions to agricultural drainage problems by retiring marginal  
7 agricultural land from irrigated agriculture, and redirect increasing  
8 scarce surface water supplies from impaired lands to more  
9 productive agricultural land.

10 (j) As future clean energy investments are planned and  
11 implemented, state officials must ensure an appropriate share is  
12 targeted to improve environmental quality, expand economic  
13 development, contribute to environmental solutions, and create  
14 jobs in the San Joaquin Valley.

15 SEC. 3. Section 399.23 is added to the Public Utilities Code,  
16 to read:

17 399.23. (a) The Public Utilities Commission and the State  
18 Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission  
19 shall evaluate potential renewable energy projects on least-conflict  
20 lands in the San Joaquin Valley. Evaluation of projects that provide  
21 the following benefits shall be prioritized:

22 (1) The economically viable and environmentally beneficial  
23 reuse of drainage-impaired agricultural lands.

24 (2) The retirement of drainage-impaired agricultural land and  
25 facilitation of regional agricultural drainage solutions.

26 (3) The facilitation of surface water supply redirection from  
27 drainage-impaired agricultural lands to other productive agricultural  
28 land.

29 (b) Using the results of the evaluation, on or before January 31,  
30 2017, the Public Utilities Commission and the State Energy  
31 Resources Conservation and Development Commission shall  
32 recommend to the Independent System Operator an amount of  
33 renewable energy production in the San Joaquin Valley that  
34 reasonably maximizes, consistent with the state's overall need for  
35 renewable energy, the use of least-conflict lands as identified by  
36 the San Joaquin Valley Solar Convening.

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