



For Immediate Release

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San Francisco Leaders Declare “Energy Independence” Ordinance Provides Key Steps to Find New Power Provider and Convert City to Renewable Energy

San Francisco, CA. Joined by consumer groups, environmental groups and leaders in renewable energy, Supervisor Tom Ammiano announced new legislation Tuesday to use the state’s “Community Choice” law to switch San Francisco to a new power supplier for electricity service and to finance renewable energy and energy conservation projects necessary to meet the goals of the City’s Electricity Resource Plan.

Supervisor Tom Ammiano announced his “Energy Independence Ordinance” (co-sponsored by Board President Matt Gonzalez and Supervisor Sophie Maxwell) flanked by Local Power Director Paul Fenn, Sierra Club International Vice President Michele Perrault, California Wind Credit Law author Tyrone Cashman, Sacramento Solar Architect Donald Aitken, UC Berkeley Professor Dan Kammen, Greenpeace USA and TURN at a Tuesday press conference in City Hall.

The ordinance follows a recent California Public Utilities Commission decision to make room for communities like San Francisco to break away from utility power contracts to control their own energy destiny under the Community Choice law (AB117, Migden).

The ordinance directs City departments to prepare an Implementation Plan and Request for Proposals for the Board of Supervisors to solicit new Electric Service Providers interested in supplying power to San Franciscans and building 360 Megawatts of new solar photovoltaic installations, distributed generation such as fuel cells, wind turbines, hydrogen, and energy efficiency and conservation technologies as standard components of the City’s future electricity service. Under community choice, power would be “wheeled” over PG&E’s lines. Ratepayers would also have the option to opt-out and remain with PG&E as their power supplier.

The conversion, say proponents, would protect residents and businesses against increasingly volatile fossil fuel prices, assist in closing power plants that cause breast cancer and childhood asthma, and make the City a leader in the global effort to stop climate change. On an average day, San Francisco requires 650 Megawatts of power at night and 850 Megawatts during the day. A 360 Megawatt investment in green power – as called for in the City’s adopted Electricity Resource Plan – would exceed the Renewable Portfolio Standard called for by state law.

Community Choice law enables power providers to mix solar with less expensive resources such as energy efficiency technologies, bringing down the average price of the City’s portfolio of resources to be competitive with PG&E’s electric bills. “What is more, after it is paid off, this infrastructure will continue to provide power to San Franciscans at radically lower rates for

decades,” said Paul Fenn of Oakland-based Local Power, who assisted Ammiano’s office in drafting the Energy independence Ordinance. “Energy independence offers San Franciscans permanent protection against future energy crises.”

Supervisor Ammiano authored the successful Proposition H Revenue Bond Authority for renewable energy projects in 2001. Proposition H, coupled with the proposed ordinance will allow the City to finance the green power projects, allowing for a more gradual repayment of the solar, wind, conservation and efficiency investments.

“This will offer a kind of insurance against wildly fluctuating energy prices and permanently reduce the amount of power San Franciscans need to buy from the grid,” said Ammiano. “We can work towards closing the City’s polluting power plants and make the City comply with the Kyoto Treaty, all at the same rates PG&E charges - now I call that a bargain.”