

# 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Energy Efficiency Forum

## Session Block #3 – RENs: Lessons Learned and the Future of Energy Efficiency

Salon A  
Level: Intermediate – Track: Stakeholder Engagement

Thursday, June 27, 2019  
10:00 – 11:15 AM

Notes prepared by **Dario Bobeda**, Corpsmember at California Conservation Corps

### Speakers:

*Laurel Rothschild*, The Energy Coalition

*Jenny Berg*, Association of Bay Area Governments/Metropolitan Transportation Commission

*Lujana Medina*, Environmental Initiatives Manager, County of Los Angeles

*Alejandra Tellez*, Sustainability Officer of Energy Programs, County of Ventura

### Session Summary:

RENs, or Regional Energy Networks, is a network of local governments that administers the regional EE portfolio. It focuses on activities and programs that utilities cannot or do not intend to undertake, primarily in hard to reach markets. The panel focused on three RENs, BayREN, SoCalREN, and 3-C REN. Jenny Berg spoke about her experience running BayREN, particularly their programs that help fill gaps in local compliance, energy policy, and state energy code. They hope to establish a uniform program across the region that can be adopted throughout the state.

Alejandra Tellez, who is a part of 3-C REN, detailed the process to becoming a REN and the successes and challenges they had doing so. 3-C REN does more than just energy efficiency, they also deal with land-use, housing, and CPAs. SoCalREN is one of the largest RENs in the state. They serve a lot of people in a lot of ways, including housing, energy efficiency, etc. all with the purpose of bringing the costs down over time. All RENs face the same challenges: balancing time and budget to maximize their outreach, even with how limited it can be. RENs may be redundant with the recent formation of CCAs. The consensus, however, was that there are so many needs and areas that need to be covered that CCAs and RENs may be able to work together to cover each other's gaps in policy.

### What are some words, phrases, or ideas that capture what practitioners need in order to successfully meet California's energy and climate goals?

Finding innovative ways to provide solutions to energy and climate goals. Finding and providing external resource funding to constituents to take the economic burden away from them. Local government collaboration.

### What was inspirational or hopeful about this session?

The amount of work being put into not only creating a REN but maintaining it, finding ways to maximize their outreach with limited funding. The passion and pride the speakers had about the work they do was inspiring.

### Quotes:

"Less fragmentation is needed; focus on what the community needs and less on what the REN needs."

