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2019 OCT 31 PM 3:20

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBERS SHENG THAO, DAN KALB,
AND MAYOR LIBBY SCHAAF

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING SENATE BILL 378 (WIENER) THAT WOULD: (1) REQUIRE PG&E TO CREATE A FUND TO REIMBURSE CUSTOMERS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR POWER SHUTOFF COSTS, (2) IMPOSE CIVIL PENALTIES ON PG&E FOR SHUTOFFS, (3) REQUIRE PG&E TO ANNUALLY REPORT ON CONDITION OF ITS EQUIPMENT, THE ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC SAFETY IMPACTS OF SHUTOFFS AND FIRE AND SAFETY RISKS, AND (4) ENCOURAGE NEW ELECTRICAL SERVICE OPTIONS

WHEREAS, a potent combination of worsening climate conditions and aging infrastructure led to the two most devastating fires in California's history in 2017 and 2018, destroying entire neighborhoods and towns; and

WHEREAS, Pacific Gas & Electricity (PG&E) created a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) policy, enabling them to shut down transmission lines in areas of extreme fire danger when red flag conditions arrive in an attempt to prevent future major wildfires; and

WHEREAS, in the buildup to the shutdown, PG&E's website crashed, preventing people from accessing crucial information on how the event would impact them, and their new website to work around that issue also crashed; and

WHEREAS, conflicting information on the timing of the event and the number of people that would be impacted added to the confusion and frustration, forcing jurisdictions to scramble to resolve potential issues; and

WHEREAS, in response to the PSPS, the City of Oakland launched its Emergency Operations Center, with 123 City employees working around the clock to ensure the safety and security of our residents, including additional first responders and providing assistance to residents with medical needs that would be impacted by a power outage; and

WHEREAS, to address concerns of the consequences that PSPS events would place on California residents, State Senator Scott Wiener introduced SB 378; and

WHEREAS, SB 378 would do the following:

- require that the California Public Utilities Commission create a process by which businesses, individuals, and local governments can recover costs accrued during a planned blackout (for example, by damaging equipment turned off too quickly) from the utility within two weeks, and require that utility shareholders – not ratepayers – are responsible for these costs;
- promote better collection of data on utility equipment in order to assess risk level beforehand, as well as require reporting on the consequences of planned blackouts after the fact;
- level hourly fees on utilities during planned blackouts, and ensure that customers cannot be billed for transmission, distribution, and other costs during a planned blackout, in addition to a stipulation that a utility cannot profit from a planned blackout (through changing electricity prices and the like);
- prevent utilities from spending ratepayer funds to oppose formation of new municipal utilities, distributed energy resource initiatives, or any other attempt to offer consumers increased energy choice and more reliable options, similar to prohibitions already; and

WHEREAS, instead of having utility companies cut off the utilities they are supposed to provide to California residents, SB 378 disincentivizes future PSPS events, making future events more surgical; and

WHEREAS, SB 378 will incentivize upgrades to our aging infrastructure that will reduce the risk of future wildfires; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Council of the City of Oakland that it hereby supports SB 378; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That that copies of this Resolution be sent to Governor Gavin Newsom, State Senators Scott Wiener and Nancy Skinner, and Assemblymembers Buffy Wicks and Rob Bonta.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FORTUNATO BAS, GALLO, GIBSON MCELHANEY, KALB, REID, TAYLOR, THAO AND PRESIDENT KAPLAN

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____
LATONDA SIMMONS
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California