Statement from Congresswoman Doris Matsui
House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis
Full Committee Hearing:
"Making the Case for Climate Action: Creating New Jobs and Catalyzing Economic Growth"
Tuesday, April 20th at 12PM via Zoom

Chairwoman Castor, Ranking Member Graves, and members of the Committee:

In October of last year, Mr. Paul Lau was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of my local utility company, the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD). But his leadership to fulfill SMUD's mission to provide clean, safe, and affordable electricity to Sacramentans began long before. Paul is a son of Sacramento. Originally from Hong Kong, he immigrated with his family to the city at the age of 12. He attended high school and college in Sacramento and has built his professional career for the last 38 years at SMUD. It all started in 1982 when he was a young electrical engineering student at California State University, Sacramento interning at the company. I am honored to have him as my constituent and as a fellow leader serving the California Capital Region.

Paul's work ethic and commitment to SMUD and the Sacramento community have positioned him to be a part of the utility's executive team for more than 12 years, most recently serving as chief grid strategy and operations officer, and now as CEO. His expertise in emerging energy technologies has also led him to serve as Vice Chair of the Large Public Power Council Emerging Trends Task Force, on the Boards of the Smart Electric Power Alliance and the Electric Transportation Community Development Corporation, on the Sacramento Asian-Pacific Chamber of Commerce, and as an Alternate Commissioner of the Balancing Authority of Northern California. In his new leadership role as CEO, Paul will use his nearly four decades of experience to spearhead the most ambitious carbon-reduction goal of any utility in the United States, SMUD's 'Zero Carbon' Plan.

As you know, SMUD is one of the nation's largest community-owned utilities, operating on a not-for-profit basis and supplying electricity to 1.5 million residents in the California Capital Region for over 75 years. As a strong partner in the fight against the climate crisis, the company has set ambitious goals to meet and exceed California's rigorous environmental requirements: it was the first large utility in the state to reach a 20 percent renewable portfolio standard and in 2018 the utility's board adopted a plan to put SMUD on a path to net-zero emissions by 2040. Now, SMUD seeks to build on its robust legacy by becoming the first utility company in the nation to completely eliminate carbon emissions from its power supply by 2030.

Paul and SMUD are not just leading the way on deep decarbonization, they are incorporating energy equity and local workforce development as they chart a path towards a clean energy future. SMUD is also focused on expanding clean energy access to underserved communities, creating green jobs, and building a pipeline to recruit, train, and hire diverse communities in the region for this transition. They seek to build community wealth by investing in partnerships with local organizations, colleges, and universities. Additionally, through its work with the California Mobility Center – a public-private consortium – SMUD aims to establish Sacramento as a center

of electric mobility innovation. Its investments in local workforce development for electrical, solar, and EV charging equipment combined with charging infrastructure efforts through the public-private consortium are estimated to generate $2.5 billion in economic activity in the region in the coming years.

Clean energy deployment and green jobs are a part of the future that our communities deserve, and SMUD is an exceptional example that we can achieve our goals to build back better sustainably. I am honored to work alongside a progressive, community-owned, and community-minded utility company and thankful to have Mr. Lau's expertise and leadership guiding clean energy efforts in Sacramento and beyond.

Thank you for your time and I yield back.