



News Release

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California ISO Board Chair Robert Foster to step down

Foster led ISO to major technology advances in renewable resources and grid reliability

FOLSOM, Calif. – Robert Foster, chair of the Board of Governors of the California Independent System Operator, announced he will step down from the board effective September 30 to pursue opportunities in the private renewable energy industry.

ISO board members are prohibited by state and federal policy from being affiliated with market participants due to potential conflict of interest.

Foster was reappointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. to a second three-year term on the ISO board in January 2013. Foster said it was a difficult decision to leave the board, and he is proud of the many strides made by the power grid operator during his tenure.

“As I look forward to new challenges, I can’t help but look back on my rewarding time as an ISO Board member,” Foster said. “It was an honor to work with some of the finest professionals in the industry to help California lead the way in deploying advanced technology that will enable more renewable generation to develop and lower our carbon emissions. I know the ISO will carry on the mission of managing a reliable grid that integrates increasing amounts of renewable resources.”

While on the board, Foster championed the ISO’s aggressive “greening” of the grid, including helping to put in place rules for giving clean resources equal footing in the marketplace and more efficient grid planning for renewable energy transmission. Foster helped drive the completion of the 500-Kv Sunrise Powerlink in 2012, one of the most important paths carrying renewables to Southern California and a lifeline to the region formerly served by the San Onofre nuclear plant, which was retired.

He was an early proponent of electric car technology, and laid the groundwork for the ISO to add electric vehicle fleets to the power grid mix. To complement that vision, Foster has worked to advance electric storage technology and advocated for increased levels of demand response in the state.

And Foster helped guide the ISO’s efforts to create the Energy Imbalance Market, currently about to be launched. The EIM will pool resources from a six-state region to

tap the lowest cost resources every five minutes to meet demand. The model will optimize electric system dispatch to successfully integrate increasing levels of renewable resources, like wind and solar power.

“This is a bittersweet day for us,” said Stephen Berberich, president and CEO of the ISO. “While we wish only the best for Bob as he continues to support renewable energy production, his departure leaves a large hole to fill, both personally and professionally. It will be difficult for us to find someone with his knowledge and expertise in energy policy.”

The ISO Board of Governors is composed of five members serving three-year staggered terms. The ISO will use an independent executive search firm to seek nominees for the vacant Board position, and engage stakeholder review in the selection process. The ISO will then give a list of recommended appointees to the governor for consideration in the appointment process.

Foster served as mayor of Long Beach from 2006 to 2014. He worked at Southern California Edison from 1984 to 2006, most recently as president of the utility. Before that, he was a private consultant and deputy executive director of the California Energy Commission, where he helped establish statewide energy efficiency standards, many of which are still in place today.

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