Notice of Exemption **Form D**

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: Community Energy Labs, Inc.

Project Title: Smart Control Automation and Learning for Energy (SCALE)

Project Location – City: Including but not limited to Bell Gardens, Cupertino, Diamond Bar, Lancaster, Little Rock, Los Angeles, Montebello, Murietta, Palm Dale, Pico Rivera, Pomona, Sunnyvale, San Jose, Temecula, and Winchester,

Project Location – County: Including but not limited to Los Angeles County, Riverside County, and Santa Clara County,

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:
This project will deploy an integration of Internet of Things, hardware, and software as a service control that uses machine learning to drive down the cost of powerful Model Predictive Control (MPC) in 10–50 K-12 sites across the state. The goal is to demonstrate a scalable, affordable solution for disadvantaged communities needing to manage changing utility rates, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning electrification, as well as energy codes. Widespread adoption of low-cost MPC in commercial buildings can collectively reduce peak energy demand, improve grid stability, and lower blackout risks.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Community Energy Labs, Inc.

Exempt Status: (*check one)*

- ☐ Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number

  Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §§ 15301, 15306
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number.
- ☐ Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, Section 15301 provides that projects which consist of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public and private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, and which involve negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination, are categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Community Energy Labs, Inc.

This project will involve the deployment of an integrated Internet of Things, hardware, and software as a service control that uses machine learning to drive down the cost of utility costs in 10-50 existing K-12 schools in California. There are no planned expansions of the site, and there will be no excessive generation of noise or odors anticipated, with no hazardous waste involved. For these reasons, the proposed work will not have any significant effect on the environment and is exempt under Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, Section 15301.

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, Section 15306, provides that projects which consist of data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities, and which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to environmental resources, are categorically exempt from CEQA. In this project, data and information will be collected on the performance of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning energy load. For this reason, the proposed work will not have any significant impact on the environment and is exempt from CEQA under Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, Section 15306.

Additionally, the project will not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies; does not involve any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; the project site is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5; and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply to this project, and this project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Public Agency
Contact Person: **Molly Mahoney** **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-776-0790

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature: Molly Mahoney **Date:** 10/10/2025 **Title:** Energy Commission Specialist

■ **Signed by Public Agency**

☐ **Signed by Applicant** **Date received for filing at OPR:** _____

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Community Energy Labs, Inc.