



**OFFICE OF ASSEMBLYMEMBER EDUARDO GARCIA
COMITE CIVICO DEL VALLE
IMPERIAL COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE
PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Imperial County Officials Meet with Schwarzenegger Institute to Discuss Lithium Valley

February 22, 2023 – On Friday, February 17, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, Ryan E. Kelley; Executive Director of Comit  Civico del Valle, Luis Olmedo; County CEO, Miguel Figueroa; and Deputy CEO, Rebecca Terrazas-Baxter, met with the 38th Governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and other officials from the USC Schwarzenegger Institute for State and Global Policy. Former California State Senator Fran Pavley and Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia chaired the discussion.

This roundtable discussion surrounded the promise of Lithium Valley, including bringing new investments and job growth to Imperial County and the state; helping California meet its climate, energy, and transportation electrification goals; and increasing supply of a critical mineral deemed essential to the economic and national security of the United States. Local officials expressed the need for assistance with local infrastructure improvements, importance of communicating with the community regarding all developments, and that the surrounding communities receive community benefits.

Also in attendance, were federal and state agency officials, energy, economic and industry experts, and others that could help foster a valuable public and private partnership to develop Lithium Valley in a way that benefits the communities in and around the area of interest.

“Our region has the potential to accelerate our nation’s clean energy future. We must continue to advocate together to bring our community’s vision of an equitable Lithium Valley, with opportunities to invest in local jobs, education, and infrastructure, to fruition,” said Assemblymember Garcia. “We are grateful to the USC Schwarzenegger Institute for State and Global Policy for working with us to host a roundtable discussion on Lithium Valley with community stakeholders and especially to the leadership of Former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Former State Senator Fran Pavley, whose work placed California on a path towards historic climate change actions. Building these strategic partnerships will help us to advance our agenda of community-first lithium priorities.”

“We need the Department of Energy, we need the Department of Transportation, we need all these agencies --- state and federal --- to coordinate and be able to push these owners intentionally to be able to build the lithium extraction facilities in a clean, safe way to be able to create the jobs, create the benefits, create the manufacturing infrastructure, to be able to export the energy. We need to be able to get those dollars allocated and direct it toward us,” Olmedo said of the message he shared at the roundtable.

“We’re thankful for former Governor Schwarzenegger and Assemblymember Garcia for convening these stakeholders with the intention to learn more about the potential of Imperial County’s Lithium Valley,” stated Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, Ryan E. Kelley. “I believe the outcome of the meeting will bring focus and attention to our federal government on the importance of Lithium Valley and how the recovery of these critical minerals will benefit our country, state, and residents.”

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For more information on Lithium Valley, the Incentives Program, and Economic Investment Opportunity Plan, visit www.LithiumValley.ImperialCounty.org.

For more information about Comite Civico del Valle and their work surrounding to improve the lives of disadvantaged communities through education and engagement, visit www.CCVhealth.org.

[Photos Attached]

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