Anna-Marie Stouder, Senior Legislative Director, California Restaurant Association
Comments before the California Resources Agency
Workshop on LNG Access Issues and Deliverability of Supply
Secretary of State Office Auditorium
1500 11th Street, First Floor, Sacramento
June 2, 2005
Re: Docket No. 05-LNG-1

Good afternoon. My name is Anna-Marie Stouder and I represent the California Restaurant Association. Thanks to the California Energy Commission and the PUC for holding this important workshop.

You don't need to be a restaurant owner to understand that a steady flow of reliable and affordable energy is critical to the restaurant industry. No one has to tell the 81,000 food service establishments, nor their one million employees that you cannot do business without the lights on and the stoves working. Therefore, expanding California's natural gas supply in order to keep energy prices down is a top priority for the California Restaurant Association

The last energy crisis was a nightmare for our members and their customers. Never knowing when a rolling blackout might occur and at what time of day – made it nearly impossible at times for some establishments to prepare the next meal. Furthermore, the rolling blackouts threatened to compromise food safety, a top priority for our industry.

California is one of the top travel destinations in the world and our members serve an essential role in keeping it that way. However, without a reliable and affordable source of energy, our members' operations would again be jeopardized along with the honor of being one of the world's premier travel destinations.

Most food establishments only make a nickel in profits for every dollar of sales it brings in. When electricity prices skyrocket during energy crunches – that nickel often vaporizes before their very eyes. And with possible summer energy black outs already on the horizon – our members' future is tenuous at best.

On behalf of the 81,000 food service establishments, their employees and families – we heartily encourage the immediate expansion of sources for natural gas and hope that you will help expedite bringing LNG to our state.

Thank you.

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DATE JUN 02 2005
RECD. JUN 03 2005