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February 15, 2010

"Docket No. 07-AFC-6"

I oppose power plants in Carlsbad.

Energy Commission Docket Unit
Docket No. 07-AFC-6
1516 Ninth Street, MS-4
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Energy Commission Officer: Thank you for the chance to speak my mind! I'm opposed to the proposed power plant, and there are several points I would like to make:

POINT #1. Within a several mile radius, the citizens and children of Carlsbad live and breathe the impacts and emissions of:

* an old REGIONAL POWER PLANT, a massive visual blight on the coastline which has belched smoke, noise and carcinogenic particulates for over half a century;

* a regional SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT, a broad visual blight to freeway travelers, which has belched noxious and putrid gas and water pollution for decades, and which is tenuous at best in its adequacy to contain carcinogenic and lung-damaging off-gassing;

* a REGIONAL AIRPORT which subjects the citizens of Carlsbad to all varieties of aircraft noise, aircraft fuel exhaust and carcinogenic particulates, to say nothing of the fear of falling airplanes;

* huge REGIONAL ELECTRICAL TRANSMISSION TOWERS AND POWER LINES, a massive maze of visual blight and Electro-magnetic radiation which spreads a web across our city to deliver power SOLD largely to users outside our community.

POINT #2. ANOTHER CONTROVERSIAL PROJECT IS ALSO PLANNED FOR THE POWER PLANT SITE, BUT IS BEING FOUGHT:

At the present, the largest water desalination plant in North America has been approved for our "power plant site". Although water conservation, expanded water storage facilities, and cutting edge "green," water-smart development in our region could result in vastly more affordable and adequate water supplies, this type of desal plant, shown elsewhere to be horribly inefficient and expensive to water users, and will bring noise, visual blight, air pollution, and, ironically, water pollution to the people of Carlsbad, while most of the water will be SOLD OUTSIDE of our city.

POINT #3. THE POWER PLANT EXPANSION WILL BE WEDGED BETWEEN TWO MAJOR TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES, AND WILL BE VULNERABLE TO

ADJACENT DAILY TRANSPORTATION OF EXPLOSIVE OR TOXIC MATERIALS:

Passengers in cars on the I-5 freeway will literally be within a stone's throw of the facility, as will trains and rail passengers. What will happen to the flow of traffic and the freeway and rail lines themselves in the instance of a catastrophic episode involving the use of natural gas by the plant. Or conversely, what happens when the regular transport of dangerous chemicals or explosives by road or rail results in an accidental or even a planned terrorist event which could damage or destroy the power plant, rails or freeway? This appears to be a very vulnerable location to me, in light of the potential catastrophic effect on both transportation and power infrastructure should any size explosion take place in the vicinity.

POINT #4. This is the most critical of my points: The costs to our health by these COMBINED INDUSTRIAL AND TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES HAVE NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY STUDIED OR REVEALED. What can we and our children expect to suffer over the next 50 years from the conglomeration of polluting public facilities in Carlsbad?

Scientifically sound studies have not even BEGUN, which could reveal these COMBINED effects on the incidence of cancer, heart disease, and respiratory illness in children and seniors living under the exhaust and radiation plumes of:

- * the existing, aged and dirty regional Encina power plant not yet slated for decommissioning
- * the huge web of power line corridors which buzz and radiate through our neighborhoods,
- * a huge regional, often overwhelmed sewage treatment plant (methane anyone?),
- * the huge, planned regional desalination plant,
- * the massive, projected I-5 Freeway 22-lane freeway expansion,
- * and the ever more crowded flight paths (and crash paths) of Palomar Airport.

POINT #5. SHORT TERM BENEFITS DO NOT OUT WEIGHT LONG TERM DAMAGE TO OUR NEW SUSTAINABLE ENERGY INDUSTRY BY COMPETITION FROM THE SOON TO BE OUTMODED, PROPOSED POWER PLANT, WHICH WILL SLOW THE PATH TO INNOVATION AND WORLD COMPETITIVENESS BY LOCAL COMPANIES:

The individual benefits of these projects are always clearly trumpeted by proponents, while their negative impacts are minimized and addressed piecemeal.

Proponents say:

"City coffers will benefit from \$5,000,000 a year in taxes." I ask you, how many more, CLEAN tax dollars could have been generated if our city fathers had had the vision to protect and promote our incredibly beautiful natural resources starting in the 1950's? We could have a

world renown reputation for quality of life right now, instead of a high incidence of cancer and lung disease in our children, and our sad claim to being the home of sewage and power plants. Can we find the vision now to say that one filthy old power plant built in the 1950's does not set a precedence for perpetuating outmoded and inappropriate use of rare and valuable coastal resources?

Proponents say:

"Jobs will be created." Yes, jobs in yet another dinosaur of an industry slated for demise as the rest of the world creates long term jobs and new "off the grid" sustainable, cleanenergy industries. This power plant will be an archaic laughing stock within 10 years, as the rest of the world heads "off the grid."

Proponents say:

"This is a state-of-the-art "energy center." I argue that the proposed plant is only state-of-the-art compared to 1950's technology, at best. It looks great on paper because it is constantly compared to the old power plant, a filthy relic of the age of DDT, dioxin and missile crises. It is doomed to a short technological life span by it's reliance on the outmoded "power grid" model, the very "grid model" which we must start to dismantle to provide and support a market for the growth of new, more vibrant, "gridless" energy technology.

Proponents say:

"We need the energy from this power plant for growth and prosperity." No, we need NEW ENERGY SOURCES AND THE NEW INDUSTRY THEY WILL BRING. We need to ESCAPE THE GRID, not be trapped by it. Our new energy industries do not need to compete with this old fashioned monster. Only then can we be protected from the massive blackouts implicit in an energy-delivery model based on the ever more vulnerable and archaic "power grid." Only off the grid can we begin to build for our children the foundation for healthy, sustainable, protected energy sources.

IN CONCLUSION:

I ASK THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION TO BOTH GUARD OUR HEALTH, AND HELP DIRECT OUR FUTURE. I invite them to join with me and my generation, to speed the end of an outdated paradigm. Let's get started on change NOW! I have a LARGER VISION FOR THIS REGION. Give us the option of a little more time to explore a healthy, prosperous AND innovative energy future for our corner of California.

And please DO NOT FORGET THIS when you make your decisions for our future: The POTENTIALLY DEADLY effects on my health, and the health of all children and citizens of Carlsbad from the COMBINED POLLUTION OF ALL OF THE REGIONAL UTILITY AND TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES I'VE NOTED ABOVE must be CLEARLY DEFINED. I ask that the danger not be evaluated in the opaque context of a mass of EPA statistics and a patchwork of industry guidelines and conflicting data. OUR COSTS IN DISEASE AND ILLNESS must be SCIENTIFICALLY DEFINED on the basis of the MOST CURRENT

MEDICAL STUDIES.

Who alone can begin the process of protecting the vulnerable children and citizens living in Carlsbad until such time that these massive projects have been shown to be truly safe in their AGGREGATE impact? It appears that in the case of the proposed power plant EXPANSION, only the MEMBERS of the California Energy Commission have the power, RIGHT NOW, to say, "Let's take the time to GET THE BIG PICTURE . Let's complete the health studies and fully explore the alternatives which can confirm that the citizens of Carlsbad and their children will be safe not from just the proposed power plant, but from the COMBINED EFFECTS of all of the "perfect storm" of REGIONAL utility and transportation facilities which we are telling them they must accept for the good of the region."

These huge facilities aim to benefit the San Diego region, but they need not destroy the lives of families who live in little Carlsbad, if time is taken, if the Commission has the vision to guide safe, sustainable, alternatives to the outdated, vulnerable "GRID" mindset of energy development.

Carlsbad residents want to start the change here and now. Let's work together to replace a vulnerable, archaic "grid" mode of energy production and delivery, and replace it with local, sustainable, renewable power production. There are more jobs, health, and long term prosperity in this new direction, if we make CHANGES NOW! This is coastal California in all its vibrancy and promise. For the sake of children of today and tomorrow, let's look to the sun, tides, and our own American ingenuity to step off this convey or belt of massive projects stabbed in the hearts of our communities. I implore the Commission to give the citizens of Carlsbad the chance to protect ourselves and move sooner toward a better future. Don't let the new generations in the coming 50 years be saddled with what will within 10 years be a dinosaur of a power plant, based on old failed visions.

You, the members of this commission, can help us. Please give us more time to explore a better vision for the future. Just a little time to complete studies to assure that our very lives are protected from the perfect storm of huge, diverse projects which have come to Carlsbad's shores. We and our children will live with the results of your choice for decades to come, so please, use your most expansive and inclusive vision on our behalf.

Thank you. I'm grateful for your time.



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