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Additional submitted attachment is included below.

June 4, 2025

LJ Piercy
36 St. Croix
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Alvin Greenberg, PhD, QEP
California Energy Commission
Docket No. 24-OPT-02

RE : Compass Energy Storage Project (SCH2025050184)

Dear Dr. Greenberg and associated California Energy Commission Staff;

PURPOSE:

To provide an opinion on the (lack of) safety considerations for Laguna Niguel, San Juan Capistrano, and surrounding communities and transportation corridors.
In my humble opinion, there seems to be a:

- **lack of thorough vetting by the State of California of this French company, and more importantly**
- **the location selected for this battery storage facility,**
- **a lack of knowledge or concern for California's weather conditions and the hazards inherent in our dry and hilly landscape at this location,**
- **disregard by the State for the consequences of these hazards to our communities and itself (the State)... whether it be economic, geographic, esthetic, habitat, property, or simple landscape destruction,**
- **No apparent understanding-of or concern-by the State for the current loss-of and increase-in Home Insurance costs,**
- **Lack of respect for our local communities for our Physical Safety by both the French corporation and even our own State for our physical safety.**

BACKGROUND:

Many from our community attended (and appreciated) the California Energy Commission's (CEC) May 29, 2025 meeting on the Compass Energy Storage Project' (held at the Capistrano Unified School District). Purpose of the Meeting was to present and hear facts and concerns related to the Compass project.

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Speakers included CEC, Compass-payrolled Staff (attorney, former fire fighter for Tesla), Government Officials including California American Tribes, and elected officials followed by public comments. **The community is not in favor of this location.**

As a long-time resident and professional in our community, I was stunned to see and hear so many false claims that had-and-were being made by Compass. When professionals--independent from Compass—spoke, it was clear that Compass' claims had been misleading, and simply untrue. (Unlike their advertisements, OC Fire, Hispanic organizations, Native Americans and other groups do not support this location by Camino Capistrano). I am truly amazed how this effort could have progressed so far without verification of claims that had been made.

Further, I am puzzled why the State bowed to Compass' pressure following project rejection by the city of San Juan Capistrano. Why hazards to the area proposed wasn't considered before applying AB 205. Why wasn't the potential for devastating outcomes (68%) at this proposed location investigated before accepting the Compass proposal? It seems to be one-dimensional thinking—meet the State's clean energy goal at the expense of its citizens...that is not strategic thinking. Lawsuits and property loss, following the known potential for devastating outcomes will preclude any intended savings.

Here is what is happening in our community: Because our homes are currently located in a **declared wildfire hazardous zone**, homeowners are having their home-owners insurance dropped or increased dramatically. If the proposed massive Lithium Battery Storage facility is successfully located by Camino Capistrano and Avery Parkway, new residents would be unable to obtain home and fire insurance. Residents trying to sell their homes would have to declare the presence of a lithium battery facility as close as 800 feet to homes. Home values will plummet.

FACTS:

- Lithium-ion batteries are prone to thermal runaway which can cause explosions, fire, and release of toxic chemicals. This proposed storage facility would be at the bottom of a hill leading to homes that are only 2 football fields away—please visualize that. There have been 83 Lithium Battery-related fires in San Diego this year alone. San Diego County experienced three fires at battery storage facilities in 2024, after having been told by Compass that there was very little chance of such an occurrence.
- AB 205 passed in 2022 to assist home and business owners during the Pandemic. When San Juan Capistrano rejected the proposed location for the storage facility, Compass took its case to Sacramento. Currently the Bill is being used with multiple misrepresentations. The Bill is being re-interpreted to say that we no longer can decide what is being placed in our communities—hazardous or not. It is unconstitutional.

- The CEC is being advised by AB 205 Opt-In Program that the CEC can decide whether to approve proposals/ projects...but not the location. This is an unconstitutional interpretation of the Bill.
- The FAA has changed regulations, effective 2026, (UN 3556, UN 3557, UN 3558, UN3481) and continues to evolve with enhanced safety requirements regarding lithium batteries in aircraft, primarily due to the **risks associated with fires and thermal runaway**. Some airlines **prohibit** Power Banks because of the potential fire hazard.
- According to the Compass business agreement with the San Juan Capistrano, Compass' employees monitoring this site will not be located on site due to the **"wildfire-prone area"** on which their facility is to be built."
- The written language in the Compass corp. agreement with SJC allows provisions for storage of other-than the most recent battery technology --Lithium Iron C (LFC). (Older technology is more fire-prone.)
- A fire at the proposed location would affect multiple schools, including Saddleback College, Capistrano Valley High School, etc. memory care facilities, small and large businesses; equestrian facilities; it would block transportation corridors from Los Angeles to San Diego (5 frwy, Amtrak).
- There is only a single in-and-out Evacuation route from Capo High School (which would direct students toward the fire.) There are no secondary Access or Egress routes for First Responders to the storage facility location, only-one road-- Camino Capistrano.
- The number of affected community residents and businesses could not be evacuated safely, (a minimum of 2-8 miles from the site)...which is to say nothing about the equine facilities close by, or preservation of San Juan Capistrano's historic Cathedral. Think about our frequent Santa Anas Winds.
- Boring studies performed on the land previously, for other commercial projects on that site, were denied, as the land was unstable.
- Any hazardous fire-runoff would lead directly into the San Juan Creek and flow into the Pacific Ocean at Doheny Beach in Dana Point. Additionally, currently there is active creek erosion.

There are so many issues.

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As a resident of Laguna Niguel, just over the hill from this prospective site, I would ask the California Energy Commission to reconsider applying the Opt-In provisions of AB 205 to the proposed Compass Energy Storage Project, or find another way to meet the State's Goals in a more strategic manner.

As another commenter suggested, the Federal land which contains San Onofre Generating Station (SONGS) might be thoroughly investigated as a site that is already secure, it is not residential, and avoids most of the previously mentioned risks.

Residential areas simply are not the right location for Lithium-Ion-or-Iron-Battery Storage facilities. Please support the communities you represent and serve.

Most Sincerely,

Lorna Piercy