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Comment Received From: John H. Oliphant
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Company Energy Storage Project in Orange County

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

From: [JHO](#)
To: [Energy - Docket Optical System](#)
Subject: Company Energy Storage Project in Orange County
Date: Monday, June 2, 2025 9:28:56 PM

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I am writing to express my strong objection to City officials vote and public statements in favor of siting a large-scale battery energy storage facility (“battery farm”) in an urban area in Orange County, especially near areas classified as a high fire risk zone.

Lithium-ion battery installations have a troubling record of fires, many of which are extremely difficult to extinguish due to “thermal runaway”—a chain reaction that can cause toxic, uncontrollable blazes. Recent incidents in California and other states have forced mass evacuations and exposed residents to hazardous fumes, sometimes requiring lockdowns miles from the fire site. These fires cannot be reliably managed with conventional firefighting methods, putting both the public and first responders at unacceptable risk.

Urban areas, with their high population density and limited evacuation routes are especially vulnerable. A battery fire in Orange County could endanger thousands, overwhelm emergency services, and cause lasting harm to property values, public health, and the environment. Experts and community groups nationwide are calling for stricter safety protocols and more careful site selection—prioritizing locations away from homes, schools, critical infrastructure and high fire areas.

I urge you to reconsider your support for any battery farm project in Orange County. At a minimum, no battery storage facility should be approved in high density urban areas or in or near high fire risk urban zones.

Moreover, hiring consultants to write environmental impact review or safety review in support of such projects are highly suspect, due to the supremely difficult issue of "proving a negative"--- not to mention all the wording in such reports, such as "no guarantees", exculpations covered by "provided however", "risk of future unforeseen events or circumstances", and all the other "weasel-wording" that consultants can write to cover their "risks" in such reports.

Unfortunately, current government officials can find so called "experts" to put their name and imprimatur on their "study" that purports to show any risk is acceptable, as the expert prefers his / her fee for writing and delivering the study with all its “weasel wording”--- and getting paid now--- and being willing to worry about any adverse consequences later. This approach to battery farm projects can be referred to as "kicking the can down the road" and is an example quintessential, bad faith, negligent government action [see below examples].

Such examples of negligence can lead to personal liability of public officials voting in favor of such battery farm projects, urged on by their supporters. Rest assured, these "supporters" will "run for the hills" at the first "whiff of trouble”.

All this will be in the face of the [former] public officials who voted their support of battery farm projects being unable to obtain insurance to pay their attorneys' fees and a changed City climate in which the then current City officials do not want to pay the legal fees in class actions against former City officials who violated their public trust.

Example of bad faith negligent government in the past few years include the Covid Lockdowns and failure over several decades for government to address the fire dangers in the Pacific Palisades. Not to mention the

Camp Fire which destroyed the town of Paradise in Northern California area in November 2018 and led in quick order to PG&E's filing of bankruptcy in the face of claims arising out of the Camp Fire.

So be on your guard! We local residents of Orange County who strongly oppose any battery farm project in Orange County have long memories and will not be deterred.

I urge you to apply your commonsense and oppose any battery farm in Orange County, as you can be assured few, if any, experts will support your negligent actions "when trouble breaks out".

Sincerely,
John H. Oliphant
Resident of Talega Gallery
San Clemente 92673