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In favor of the Compass Energy BESS project

Growing up as a 27 year resident of San Juan Capistrano, I heard the annual siren tests conducted by the San Onofre nuclear power plant, until it was shut down 12 years ago. This region lost 2.2GW of carbon free energy generation as a result, which has been replaced with gas power plants and recently with emerging BESS projects across the region. I attended both public comment sessions, and as a neighbor to the site in Village San Juan, I understand the concerns of my neighbors with this project.

However, I believe that this project should move forward. Many of my neighbors have said that this is just not the site for a project like this, and that it should go somewhere else. But the reality of our power grid requires this kind of project in a site exactly like this. Thousands of homes in the area now generate solar power from their rooftops, and that excess energy is lost or wasted. Building on a site further from both the source, and demand, of power will only increase our system-wide transmission costs. Residents are right to require the highest standards of safety from Compass Energy, but as you can tell from other public comments, there is an outright opposition to building anything and everything in this area.

To mitigate fire risk, the CEC should require weed mitigation, and irrigation installation on the (quite frankly neglected) hillsides adjacent to the site. There are of course more actions that can be taken to reduce risks associated with the project, and unfortunately none of them would reduce the intense opposition this project is receiving, but much like the same risks we took in living here for decades under the 50 mile evacuation zone of the San Onofre plant, this is a responsible risk very much worth taking.