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*Comment Received From: Theresa Ford*  
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**Concerns regarding Developer Communications Conferring with CEC**

*Additional submitted attachment is included below.*

**Subject:** Concerns Regarding Developer Communications and Geotechnical Evaluation at Proposed Compass Project 24-OPT-02

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to respectfully express concern regarding a recent letter submitted by Engie (TN#264698) to the CEC, in which the developer indicates its intent to confer directly with the California Energy Commission (CEC) regarding geotechnical solutions to erosion issues at the proposed site.

Specifically, the excerpt stating, *“There are numerous solutions we are considering and we will confer with the CEC about these options in the next few weeks once we have new analysis available. We would like to continue with the scheduled CEC staff geoscience site visit next week so that we can obtain CEC SME input as we clarify the design considerations,”* raises serious questions about the nature and appropriateness of such communications.

While I fully support the CEC’s commitment to transparency and technical rigor, I am concerned that direct consultation between the developer and Commission staff—particularly in the context of design clarification—may inadvertently compromise the impartiality of the decision-making process. The CEC serves as the adjudicative body in this proceeding, and any perception of undue influence or pre-decisional collaboration could undermine public confidence and potentially raise procedural concerns.

I urge the Commission to ensure that all communications between developers and CEC staff are conducted in a manner that preserves the integrity of the process and avoids any appearance of pre-decisional collaboration. While our community appreciates the transparency provided through docketed documentation, we remain concerned about the lack of public access to informal meetings or verbal exchanges that may influence project outcomes. It is not appropriate for a developer/applicant to confer with the decision-maker in order to clarify or resolve design challenges. If technical expertise is needed, it should be obtained independently—not by involving the CEC in shaping the solution to a problem it may later be asked to adjudicate.

This letter is submitted in good faith and with the utmost respect for the Commission’s role and responsibilities. My intent is not to obstruct progress, but to safeguard the fairness and credibility of the siting process—particularly in light of the significant environmental and community impacts at stake.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust the Commission will take appropriate steps to ensure that its deliberations remain impartial and above reproach.

Theresa Ford