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*Comment Received From: Neil Serr*  
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## **Impacts on Prime Agricultural Land**

Subject: Opposition to the Corby Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project Due to Impacts on Prime Agricultural Land

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Corby Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project, which is currently under review. While I fully support the state's commitment to renewable energy and grid reliability, this project raises significant concerns due to its proposed siting on prime agricultural land, which is a limited and invaluable resource in California.

California's Central Valley is one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world. The loss of prime farmland to industrial energy infrastructure, especially when alternative, less productive lands may be available, is short-sighted and counter to long-term sustainability goals. Once this land is converted to industrial use, it is unlikely to return to agricultural production—resulting in permanent impacts on food security, rural economies, and regional heritage.

Key concerns include:

### **Irreversible Loss of Prime Farmland**

The proposed site occupies land classified as prime farmland, which is defined as having the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for crop production. California cannot afford to lose such irreplaceable resources to non-agricultural development, especially in the face of climate change, drought, and increasing food demands.

### **Environmental Justice and Land Use Precedent**

Approving this project would set a dangerous precedent for siting large-scale energy infrastructure on agriculturally zoned land, undermining local land use plans and agricultural protections. Communities should not be forced to choose between clean energy and food security.

### **Availability of Alternative Sites**

There are likely to be other, less agriculturally valuable locations suitable for BESS facilities—such as previously disturbed or industrial-zoned lands. The Commission should require a full and transparent alternatives analysis before moving forward with any approval.

### **Conflict with State Agricultural and Land Conservation Policies**

California has adopted policies and programs (such as the Williamson Act and Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program) that aim to protect farmland from conversion. This project directly contradicts those commitments.

I respectfully urge the California Energy Commission to deny the Corby BESS project in its current form and to direct the applicant to pursue alternative siting options that do not threaten California's agricultural base.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued service to the people and environment of California.

Sincerely, Neil Serr