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*Comment Received From: Rebekah Aftim
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Comments on RB Inyokern Data Center " CEC Docket 26-SPPE-01 " Request Full Environmental Impact Review, especially with respect

To the office of the CEC Project Manager:

I am a resident of Ridgecrest, writing to express concern about the proposed RB Inyokern Data Center currently under review under CEC Docket 26-SPPE-01.

The Indian Wells Valley groundwater basin is formally designated as critically overdrafted. Current pumping is 20,840 acre-feet per year against the reported sustainable yield of only 7,650. A facility of this size, using evaporative cooling in desert conditions, can consume roughly 500,000 gallons of water per day - close to 8 percent of the basin's entire sustainable annual yield, used by a single facility every day. Even at the numbers claimed by the developer, just the first phase would use almost 2% of our entire valley's sustainable yield, with at least one more phase already announced, bringing the project to 198MW according to investment marketing materials.

This basin has no surface water. No river. No backup. The aquifer is the only source of water for 38,000 residents and Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake. Phase 2 of the water rights adjudication goes to trial June 1, 2026. The pipeline currently proposed to address this project has no appropriated funding or complete design, is considered by many to be unfeasible and depends on a State Water Project that delivered only 5% of contracted water in 2022 and sits at 30% for 2026. There is no margin for new large-scale groundwater demand at this time.

My great-grandfather first worked in this valley before China Lake Naval Weapons Station was established. My grandmother and grandfather worked on the base, my grandfather working on the Sidewinder missile among other projects and having a hanger at the Inyokern Airport with his name on it. My father, uncle, cousins, and sister have worked or are working on the base in everything from business operations to chemistry. My husband works on the base, and I have considered how I might contribute to its vital mission once my boys are older. I have wondered whether they too might find purpose and employment in this valley my family has been living in and appreciating for over a 100 years.

We love this desert. We love this community. It is already such a sorrow that the LA aqueduct runs through our valley, disturbing the balance of natural resources in neighboring Owens Valley. When the IWV Water District asked residents to reduce water usage, people responded almost universally by xeriscaping yards, filling in pools, and planting native trees. We reduced water usage even more than the amount they requested us to cut back on. We did not do this to enable a data center. The data center

for many reasons may presage the beginning of the end of sustainably using the space and resources this valley provides, both for your constituents and through their work our contribution to the nation.

I respectfully request a full environmental review with specific attention to water-supply impacts, and that any approval require the use of demonstrated water-neutral or dry-cooling technology before construction begins.

Rebekah Aftim
Ridgecrest/Indian Wells Valley Resident
Former Sierra Sands Unified School District teacher

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