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| Project Title: | RB Inyokern Data Center (RBIDC) |
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| Document Title: | Robert Harwood Comments - Docket 26-SPPE-01 |
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Comment Received From: Robert Harwood
Submitted On: 5/22/2026
Docket Number: 26-SPPE-01

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see attached

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

Date: May 22, 2026

To: California Energy Commission

Re: Opposition to Docket 26-SPPE-01 RB Inyokern Data Center (RBIDC)

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed project identified in Docket 26-SPPE-01. RB Inyokern Data Center (RBIDC).

This proposal raises serious concerns regarding water consumption, air quality, energy demand, environmental impacts, and the long-term impacts to the Mojave desert region. I urge the Commission to carefully consider whether this project is consistent with California's environmental, climate, and community-protection goals.

First, the project appears to require substantial water resources for cooling and operations in an already water-stressed desert environment. Communities throughout the Indian Wells Valley and surrounding areas are already facing groundwater sustainability challenges. Approving a large-scale industrial project with potentially significant water demand could worsen long-term groundwater depletion and place additional pressure on local residents and future generations.

Second, the project's reliance on extensive backup generation infrastructure raises major air-quality concerns even periodic testing of emergency generators can contribute over time.

Third, the scale of electricity demand associated with hyperscale data-center development raises broader concerns about grid reliability and energy policy. California residents continue to face rising utility costs and pressure on the electric grid during peak demand periods. It is reasonable to question whether allocating enormous energy resources to private AI and data-center expansion serves the broader public interest.

I am also concerned that the Small Power Plant Exemption process may not provide the level of environmental review warranted for a project of this scale and complexity. Projects with potentially significant impacts to air quality, biological resources, water supplies, and community character deserve the highest level of scrutiny and meaningful public participation.

In addition, this project could create long-term impacts to the rural and scenic character of the region through industrial lighting, noise, transmission infrastructure, and visual disturbance. Desert ecosystems are fragile and recover slowly from industrial development. Once major infrastructure corridors are established, additional industrial expansion often follows.

Finally, I urge the Commission to carefully evaluate whether the economic benefits outweigh the long-term environmental and community costs. Highly automated data-center facilities often generate relatively limited permanent employment while creating lasting demands on land, water, energy, and public infrastructure.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the California Energy Commission deny the requested exemption or require a far more comprehensive environmental review process before any approval is considered.

Thank you for your consideration and for protecting California's communities and natural resources.

Sincerely,

Robert Harwood
Ridgecrest CA,