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Comment Received From: Victoria Serr
Submitted On: 9/14/2026
Docket Number: 24-OPT-05

Incomplete items in staff assessment

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

California Energy Commission

Docket No. 24-OPT-05

Corby Battery Energy Storage System Project

Re: Opposition to Approval of the Corby BESS Project at the Kilkenny Road/Byrnes Road Site and Support for Lambie Industrial Park Alternative

Dear California Energy Commission Commissioners and Staff:

I am writing to respectfully but strongly oppose approval of the proposed Corby Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project at the proposed Kilkenny Road/Byrnes Road location unless and until all outstanding environmental, public safety, land-use, fire protection, hazardous materials, transportation, water, agricultural, and other significant issues identified during the review process have been fully addressed.

I support the development of renewable energy and energy storage when it is appropriately planned and safely located. My objection is to the proposed location and to moving forward with approval before the outstanding concerns have been adequately resolved.

The CEC's review has identified a number of important issues that deserve careful consideration before any final approval is granted. Given the potential consequences of a serious BESS incident, including fire, thermal runaway, hazardous emissions, evacuation requirements, impacts to transportation corridors, and potential impacts to surrounding agricultural land and nearby residents, the Commission should take a precautionary approach.

Protection of Agricultural Land

One of my primary concerns is the use of agricultural land for a large industrial energy facility.

Agricultural land is a finite resource. Once productive farmland is converted to an industrial use, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to restore it to its former agricultural condition.

The Commission should therefore give serious consideration to whether a large-scale BESS facility truly needs to be placed on agricultural land when an industrially designated alternative such as Lambie Industrial Park is available for consideration.

Public Safety and Fire Risk

BESS facilities require careful consideration of fire protection and emergency response because battery thermal-runaway events can present unusual and potentially difficult hazards for firefighters and surrounding communities.

Before approving this project, the CEC should ensure that all questions regarding fire detection, suppression, emergency response, thermal runaway, toxic or hazardous emissions, evacuation procedures, water requirements, firefighter safety, emergency access, and coordination with local emergency agencies have been fully resolved.

The Commission should not approve the project simply on the assumption that mitigation measures will be adequate. The effectiveness of those measures should be demonstrated, documented, and independently evaluated.

Nearby Residents, Businesses and Transportation

The proposed location also raises concerns regarding its proximity to existing residents, businesses, agricultural operations and major transportation routes.

A serious BESS incident could potentially require evacuations, road closures, emergency response operations, and restrictions on nearby transportation corridors.

The CEC should therefore fully evaluate the consequences of a worst-case credible incident rather than considering only normal operating conditions.

Lambie Industrial Park Should Receive Serious Consideration

I respectfully ask the Commission to give substantial consideration to **Lambie Industrial Park as an alternative location for the Corby BESS Project.**

CEC documents indicate that Lambie Industrial Park is an approximately 1,461-acre property bounded by Lambie Road, Goose Haven Road and Creed Road. CEC staff have noted that the property has an Industrial land-use designation and Manufacturing General zoning, and that it is farther from sensitive receptors such as residences, schools and hospitals than sites along the I-80 corridor. The CEC has also specifically requested additional information concerning the feasibility of developing a BESS facility at Lambie. These characteristics make Lambie worthy of serious consideration as an alternative to placing the facility on agricultural land near the Kilkenny Road/Byrnes Road area. An industrially designated location appears to be much more compatible with the nature of a large-scale energy storage facility than converting agricultural land to an industrial use.

If additional transmission infrastructure, interconnection work, engineering, or permitting is required at Lambie, those issues should be weighed against the long-term environmental and public-safety consequences of selecting the current site.

A project that will operate for decades should be located where it is most compatible with surrounding land uses and where risks to residents, agricultural resources and emergency responders can be minimized.

Do Not Approve Until the Outstanding Issues Are Resolved

I therefore respectfully request that the California Energy Commission:

1. **Do not approve the Corby BESS Project at the proposed Kilkenny Road/Byrnes Road location at this time.**
2. Require that all significant environmental, public health, hazardous-materials, fire-safety, emergency-response, transportation, water, agricultural, land-use and other outstanding issues identified through the Staff Assessment and public comments be fully addressed before any approval is considered.
3. Require a thorough and transparent comparison of the proposed site with **Lambie Industrial Park**, including safety, land-use compatibility, agricultural

impacts, emergency access, transmission requirements, environmental impacts, construction impacts and long-term operational risks.

4. Require the applicant to provide sufficient evidence demonstrating why Lambie Industrial Park cannot reasonably accommodate the project if the applicant continues to oppose that alternative.
5. Give preference to an appropriately zoned industrial location over the conversion of productive agricultural land when the industrial alternative can meet the fundamental objectives of the project.
6. Ensure that the final decision does not result in significant impacts being accepted merely because mitigation measures are proposed, without adequate evidence that those measures will actually protect residents, agricultural resources, emergency responders and the surrounding environment.

I believe California can pursue renewable energy and battery storage while also protecting agricultural land and the safety and quality of life of local communities. The question should not simply be whether the Corby BESS Project can be built at the proposed location. The more important question is whether it **should** be built there when a potentially more appropriate industrial alternative such as Lambie Industrial Park is available for consideration.

I respectfully urge the California Energy Commission to take the time necessary to fully resolve the outstanding issues and to carefully evaluate Lambie Industrial Park before approving the Corby BESS Project.

Please do not approve the Corby BESS Project at the Kilkenny Road/Byrnes Road site until all significant concerns have been fully addressed and the Lambie Industrial Park alternative has been thoroughly evaluated.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments and for your responsibility to protect the public, the environment, agricultural resources and the communities affected by this project.

Respectfully,

Neil Serr

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