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Comment Received From: Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson

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On Public Workshop for the Preliminary Staff Assessment

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

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California State Legislature

SENATOR
HANNAH-BETH JACKSON
NINETEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



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JOINT COMMITTEE ON ARTS

July 21, 2016

Alana Mathews
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**RE: California Energy Commission Public Workshop for the Preliminary Staff
Assessment for the Puente Power Project**

Dear Ms. Mathews:

As proposed, the Puente Power Project would be located in my district, which includes the Western half of Ventura County and all of Santa Barbara County.

I am deeply concerned that the California Energy Commission's (CEC) Preliminary Staff Assessment appears to favor Southern California Edison (SCE)'s application for approval of a contract with NRG Energy for a new 262 MW generating facility to be located adjacent to the existing NRG Mandalay Generating Station—despite the serious concerns of those who would most negatively be affected by these projects, the City of Oxnard and the numerous local residents and organizations that stand in opposition to its approval.

The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) has identified Oxnard as a community disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment has categorized much of Oxnard, including the location of this proposed project, in the top 10 percent of zip codes most negatively impacted by pollution in the state. The proposal to locate another power plant, which impacts the health and safety of its residents in Oxnard—a California city with the most number of coastal power plants and a relatively high proportion of immigrants and people of color—raises concern about our state's codified commitment to the principles of environmental justice.

While it is true that the City of Oxnard is already home to the Mandalay Generation Station, this does not automatically make the proposed Puente Power Project site a brownfield. On the contrary, people from all over the region visit McGrath State Beach and the Santa Clara River Estuary located north of the plant and Mandalay State Beach located just to the south. Simply because this community has been burdened by the existence of a power plant on its shoreline in the past, does not mean the community should continue to be burdened by building the proposed Puente Power Plant in the future. Additionally, by locating the power plant on the beach, public access to a public resource is seriously compromised. The California Coastal Act mandates that development shall not interfere with the public's right to access the beach. While I would prefer that our future energy needs be met through renewables and energy efficiency, if a new power plant is unavoidable it should be sited on an actual brownfield located outside of the coastal zone and away from sensitive habitat.

Having chaired the Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Management, I appreciate the energy production and transmission challenges we face in our state and realize we must seize opportunities to create more resilient and dependable infrastructure that will, among other things, move us away from coastal power plants which are vulnerable to sea level rise. One of the CEC's core responsibilities is to plan for and direct state response to energy emergencies. I share the City of Oxnard's concern about this NRG facility's exposure to current and future coastal storms, shoreline erosion, nearby earthquake fault lines and tsunami hazards.

It is my hope and expectation that we can work together to protect our public health, our environment and meet our energy needs locally and across our great state in a reliable and responsible manner. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance by contacting me or my District Representative, Allison Maginot, at 805-998-1940.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hannah-Beth Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

HANNAH-BETH JACKSON
Senator, 19th District