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INTERVENOR CITY OF OXNARD

EXHIBIT _____

Testimony of Carmen Ramirez

Qualifications

I am a member of the Oxnard City Council. I submit this testimony on my own behalf regarding the disproportionate presence of industrial facilities located along the coast in the City of Oxnard. I have worked in Oxnard since 1978 and have lived in Oxnard since 1992.

Statement

Oxnard is the site of 3 separate power generating facilities, the Southern California Edison McGrath Peaker, the NRG Mandalay Bay Generating Station, and the NRG Ormond Beach Generating Station. The Mandalay Station contains three separate power generating units and Ormond Beach has two. Therefore, the City currently has 6 separate power generating units located along its coastline. In addition to these power generating facilities, the Halaco superfund site is located in the midst of significant coastal wetlands in the vicinity of Ormond Beach.

During the time I have worked and lived in Oxnard, I have experienced the blighting effect that so many industrial facilities have had on what is otherwise an outstanding coastal resource. Because the Mandalay Generating Station and the Ormond Beach Generating Station have such a dominant presence, their negative effects extend beyond the boundaries of the facilities. For example, there is currently a public park, Mandalay Beach Park, immediately to the south of the NRG Mandalay Generating Station and a public park immediately to the north, McGrath State Park. However, the presence of the NRG power plants at Mandalay is a physical and psychological impediment to public enjoyment of the beach. The Mandalay Generating Station looms over the beach, destroying the sense that it is a natural resource to be enjoyed by the public. The presence of the Halaco site further degrades the natural beauty of one of the most important coastal wetland areas in southern California.

As a result of these facilities, the public is less likely to use the beach and its enjoyment of the beach suffers from the constant presence of industrialization along the coast. It is possible to discern the northern and southern limits of the Oxnard Coastline by the location of the NRG power plants. From the steps of Ventura City Hall on Poli Street, one can see the Ormond Generating Station at Ormond, at the southern end of Oxnard and the Mandalay Generating Station at the northern end. Even from the air, flying

between Northern and Southern California, many times I have looked out the airplane window to see where Oxnard is using these two bookends. It is my experience that many people who are residents of Oxnard are resentful of the fact that our Oxnard beaches are industrialized. Many residents of the city never go to their own beaches because of its industrial character. Or, they do not realize that these are public spaces or that there is even access to the shore. This is particularly true for the southern beaches at Ormond; but it is also true for the area around the Mandalay plant.

In addition to the NRG facilities, the McGrath Peaker, and the Halaco Superfund site, an abandoned landfill and many other industrial facilities are located in Oxnard. The City also experiences substantial pollution from agricultural practices, including the use of pesticides, often in close proximity to schools and homes. Others outside the city sometimes express denigrating comments about Oxnard as an industrial dumping ground, including disparagement of our community because of the power plants, industrialization of the coast, a Super fund site, and general poverty. The Final Staff Assessment's focus on only the incremental increases in air pollution or health risks from the proposed Puente Power Project misses the larger impact that the predominance of industrial facilities and pollution has on the public space.

Since the City's first Local Coastal Plan was adopted, the City has taken the position that no new or expanded power plants should be located on its coast. Since that time the City has adopted a new General Plan that also prohibits thermal energy generating facilities over 50 megawatts in areas subject to environmental hazards, including coastal hazards and sea level rise. This policy is an integral element in the City's effort to plan for sea level rise and to reclaim its coast. The approval of the Puente Power Plant will interfere with Oxnard's ability to plan for its future and it will perpetuate a legacy of disproportionate siting that has impeded public access to and use of Oxnard's beaches.



Signature

January 17, 2017

Date