

DOCKETED

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Marion D. Vargas Comments

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

3209 La Cresta Dr
Bakersfield, CA 93305

California Energy Commission
Dockets Unit, MS-14, Docket No. 8-AFC-8A
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

September 15, 2013

Dear Commissioners and CEC Staff:

I've lived in Bakersfield since 1969. It's a wonderful place to live and raise a family. On a good day you can see clearly the mountain ranges that border us on three sides.

But air quality in our valley now is typically poor. There are days when I can't see the mountains at all! Traveling on Mt. Vernon Avenue from the bluffs by Bakersfield College, I look south and can barely make out the street and neighborhoods below. I should not be able to see the air! In talking with friends and neighbors, the conversation turns to bad air, how lousy we are all feeling, how hard it is to breathe and that eyes are stinging from the pollution. One friend decided not to go to our knitting group because she has asthma and has difficulty breathing when the pollution is high. Another said she had taken her sick granddaughter to the doctor. The child's problem is due to bad air. Newscasters warn us that people and even animals should stay inside. Our cars parked outside for a few days are soon covered with a thick layer of particulate matter. That is what we are breathing on bad air days.

I exercise, eat right and have a positive attitude, but it is difficult to feel good when the air is so polluted. It is especially difficult for those who have asthma, heart or lung disease or allergies. HECA would worsen this already worst pollution. Its daily 350-400 trucks loaded with coal and waste, spewing diesel exhaust is reason enough for this plant to be banned from our valley. But there is more: HECA plant pollutants and toxins, risks from untested technology, dangers from production of chemical fertilizers, damages to our roads and the consumption of vast amounts of agriculturally useful water.

HECA touts its production of energy as being in the public interest; but, as the CEC PSA/DEIS reports, fertilizer manufacture would use up most of that, with only 52 megawatts going to the grid, not 400. The DOE did not provide seed money to start a fertilizer plant. It is not in the public interest to permit a polluting fertilizer plant that produces minimal electricity at great cost to our quality of life.

Those who support HECA stand to benefit financially. Even the Valley Air Pollution Control District would receive HECA money to administer the many mitigation programs. However, some damages cannot be mitigated, certainly not for us; and the magnitude of effects from HECA is still unknown.

Many I have spoken with oppose HECA because of its risks and negative impacts but they feel helpless to influence the outcome of this application. They say that money talks and we have no control over what will be decided. This apparent apathy is a product of their experiences and it undermines our democratic way of life. Do not let us down this time. HECA is bad for the residents of the San Joaquin Valley. Do not allow it to be built here.

Sincerely,



Marion D. Vargas