

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	08-AFC-08A
Project Title:	Hydrogen Energy Center Application for Certification Amendment
TN #:	201013
Document Title:	9-18-13 Transcript of Public Hearing in Buttonwillow
Description:	N/A
Filer:	Tiffani Winter
Organization:	California Energy Commission
Submitter Role:	Commission Staff
Submission Date:	10/23/2013 11:41:19 AM
Docketed Date:	10/17/2013

HYDROGEN ENERGY CALIFORNIA PROJECT

Public Comments

SEPTEMBER 18, 2013

Transcribed by: Robin Saldana

06:04 1 MR. POZZUTO: Hello. Can I have everybody's
06:05 2 attention. We'd like to get the meeting started as
06:05 3 soon as possible here.

06:05 4 I want to remind everybody that there's blue
06:05 5 cards for signing if you wish to speak, and we will
06:05 6 call the speakers up in the order we receive them.
06:05 7 There's also a mail-in form for anybody that wants to
06:05 8 write their comments and mail them in. If they want to
06:05 9 write their comments and not speak, they can provide it
06:05 10 to MR. POZZUTO transcriptionist. There is a
06:05 11 translator -- Spanish translator if you need that
06:05 12 service, but you don't have to use it if you don't want
06:05 13 to.

06:05 14 A brief explanation of this whole process is
06:05 15 that the Department of Energy and the California Energy
06:05 16 Commission are producing a joint document sort of for
06:06 17 simplicity and ease of public comment on one document
06:06 18 rather than two documents about the same project.
06:06 19 There are a lot of similarities. The need for process
06:06 20 requires public involvement, and the
06:06 21 Department of Energy is going to use this document to
06:06 22 determine whether we fund the project forward through
06:06 23 operation and construction. And our decision makers
06:06 24 will use that to make that determination.

06:06 25 We will not make that determination until the

06:06 1 ROD is issued, which is a Record of Decision, and we
06:06 2 will not issue a Record of Decision until the
06:06 3 Energy Commission has gone through their process.

06:06 4 Our process has a limited public comment
06:06 5 period which ends October 1st. The Energy Commission's
06:06 6 public comment period continues through the entire
7 certification process. So that's all we can answer for
8 the public.

9 The PowerPoint presentation that we have
10 isn't here. We are having trouble loading it up. So
06:07 11 without any further ado, the ground rules of this are
06:07 12 you have four minutes to comment. The timer is there.
06:07 13 When the yellow light signals, you have about
06:07 14 30 seconds to wrap it up; and then when the red light
06:07 15 goes off, the four minutes is up. We had the same
06:07 16 program yesterday evening, and we found that
06:07 17 four minutes seems to be adequate.

06:07 18 So this is more for people to provide
06:07 19 comments to us. We're not going to get into a debate
06:07 20 back and forth and answer questions; however, we
06:08 21 certainly will answer questions. If we need to, we can
06:08 22 make a brief clarification.

06:08 23 The HECA folks are at the table over here;
06:08 24 the Energy Commission folks are to my right, to your
06:08 25 left. And we would ask if there's any elected public

06:08 1 officials, they get to speak first. I do not have that
06:08 2 in this pile. So I would assume there are not any
06:08 3 elected public officials here to -- that desire to
06:08 4 speak.

06:08 5 In that case we're going to go through the
06:08 6 speakers that we received -- that we have in the order
06:08 7 that we received them. And, also, if you gave
06:08 8 testimony last night and you want to repeat that
06:08 9 testimony again, that's perfectly fine. It will be all
06:08 10 part of the record. If you choose not to, that's fine,
06:09 11 also.

06:09 12 Don Van Lue from Tupman.

13 Don, you have the floor.

06:09 14 MR. VAN LUE: Thank you. My name is
06:09 15 Don Van Lue. I'm from Tupman, California. I have
06:09 16 a couple articles I'd like to speak about.

06:09 17 One of the articles is about these cooling
06:09 18 towers that they're going to build out here. It said
06:09 19 in the preliminary report that HECA does not own these
06:09 20 cooling towers. They're not going to build them. I'd
06:09 21 like to know who is and how come they're not doing it
06:09 22 because they should be analyzed, too, along with HECA
06:09 23 and Occidental. It goes the same way if they're
06:09 24 supposed to build and maintain these cooling towers.

06:09 25 Water has already been talked about today.

06:09 1 We all know how much water they're going to use.

06:09 2 One of the other things is the wind on a
06:10 3 daily basis. Our wind comes out of the northwest at
06:10 4 three to seven miles an hour preliminary, sometimes
06:10 5 12, 15. I've seen it up to 30 through here. At those
06:10 6 speeds, if anything happens, it will only take a matter
7 of seconds for the wind to get down here.

06:10 8 One other thing I would like to say -- this
06:10 9 is addressed to Energy Commission and the
06:10 10 Department of Energy -- there's a lawsuit going on
06:10 11 right now against the Air Resources Board and
06:10 12 California and the Federal Government against
06:10 13 cap-and-trade. The foundation thinks it's illegal, and
06:10 14 I think that this whole project should be shut down
06:10 15 until the courts rule on this.

06:10 16 Thank you.

06:10 17 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you very much, Don.

06:11 18 The next speaker is a Leah Volkoff. Lee or
06:11 19 Leah Volkoff

06:11 20 MS. VOLKOFF: Leah. All I really wanted to
06:11 21 say, I guess, as just, first, for us all to remember
06:11 22 that at the end of the day, all we have really is our
06:11 23 health because if we didn't, we would obviously all be
06:11 24 dead. And I say that because I lost my grandmother
06:11 25 when I was five years old of lung cancer, and she never

1 smoked a cigarette in her life. But she spent a
06:11 2 significant portion of her life here in the Valley.
06:11 3 And now I have an uncle that also has lung cancer and
06:11 4 was born and raised here in the Valley. I thank God
06:12 5 that my father who was also born and raised here in the
06:12 6 Valley doesn't have it, but I also lost another uncle
06:12 7 of cancer. It wasn't lung cancer specifically,
06:12 8 although he did have some specifically there.

06:12 9 So just a reminder to all of those that make
06:12 10 decisions here for us and fund these projects, although
06:12 11 you may not live here, we still do. It wasn't
06:12 12 necessarily by choice that I was born here, but this is
06:12 13 where I am. And I just ask that you consider these
06:12 14 things.

06:12 15 I don't know -- I know that money means a lot
06:12 16 to a lot of people sometimes, but really at the end of
06:12 17 the day, I just ask that you consider my health and the
06:12 18 health of everybody in this room when you make this
06:12 19 decision. It oftentimes seems that they were just made
06:13 20 for money.

06:13 21 Thank you very much.

06:13 22 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Leah.

06:13 23 The next person to speak is a Mary White.

06:13 24 MS. WHITE: Good evening everybody.

06:13 25 Mary White, born and raised here in the Valley.

06:13 1 There's a lot of things going on, but I just want to
06:13 2 say that all the opponents of HECA complain that the
06:13 3 project is going to take prime farmland out of
06:13 4 agricultural use.

06:13 5 Of all that acreage that HECA has obtained
06:13 6 for their project, over 60 percent of it will remain in
06:13 7 active agricultural use. The portion that the plant
06:13 8 will be built on represents only 0.7 percent of all of
06:14 9 Kern County's agricultural land. That's a really small
06:14 10 percentage.

06:14 11 We have a right to come here and voice our
06:14 12 opinions about this project. HECA also has a right to
06:14 13 do business on the land that they've already purchased.
06:14 14 Of course, they must go through all the permitting and
06:14 15 environmental studies. I just think it's funny that
06:14 16 these people don't show up in droves to oppose the
17 commercial buildings that are popping up all around
06:14 18 Kern County. I'm sure that some come from land
06:14 19 previously farmed on.

06:14 20 I think the project is a good thing, and I'm
06:14 21 all for it.

06:14 22 Thank you.

06:14 23 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you very much, Mary.

06:14 24 The next person is a Lonnie Parker.

06:14 25 MR. PARKER: Hello. Good evening, gentlemen.

06:15 1 My name is Lonnie Parker. I'm a longtime citizen
06:15 2 resident. I was born in Taft; I live in Bakersfield
06:15 3 now. I do have property in Tupman. And I was going to
06:15 4 read all of this stuff about the plant, but you guys
06:15 5 know most of that stuff.

06:15 6 The environment: Everybody's concerned about
06:15 7 the environment. The government has strict
06:15 8 restrictions on hazardous waste.

06:15 9 And I know you have to consider all those
06:15 10 things, and I know you already have. And I lived on
06:15 11 the Pom farms where this project is going to be
06:15 12 constructed. I was born and raised there. I live -- I
06:15 13 lived there when the pomegranate trees lined the edges.
06:16 14 I irrigated the cotton fields there. And I've seen
06:16 15 automation come in, the lack of farmhands because of
06:16 16 the automation. This is what happens.

06:16 17 And I am glad to see this project come in
06:16 18 here, and I am reassured by these environmental studies
06:16 19 and the Government regulations that have been installed
06:16 20 and you must obey. And I just welcome you guys in, and
06:16 21 God bless you.

06:16 22 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you very much, Lonnie.

06:16 23 The next speaker will be a Trudy Douglas.
06:16 24 Trudy Douglas?

06:16 25 MS. DOUGLAS: Hello. Nice to be here. Last

06:17 1 night HECA said that 9411 trucks are going to make 822
06:17 2 round trips a day. It got me thinking about the trucks
06:17 3 and how that could be. I don't have -- I have
06:17 4 questions, but they don't have to be answered right
06:17 5 now.

06:17 6 Will every owner of HECA be mandated to own
06:17 7 and maintain their own truck fleet and use Union
06:17 8 drivers? All government-funded projects are supposed
06:17 9 to hire Union. Will they pay wages, benefits,
06:17 10 appropriate taxes, and insure them on their own policy?
06:17 11 Will the statutable steps used by HECA be such that it
06:17 12 would not be an undue pressure on drivers to cause them
06:17 13 to make unsafe decisions? And will every truck be
06:17 14 washed every time it leaves the factory?

15 Conversely, will HECA owners be allowed to
06:18 16 hire independent haulers at the lowest prices they can
06:18 17 get away with? Have they -- they have no equipment or
06:18 18 maintenance criteria or responsibility for road safety
06:18 19 and accidents

06:18 20 This factory will cost \$4 million. And then
06:18 21 there are the costs for upgrading the rail and the
06:18 22 roads and the infrastructure. A trainload of coal is
06:18 23 going to cost approximately possibly between \$150- and
06:18 24 \$200,000 and that would be 365 days a year. Did you
06:18 25 know that shippers are often charged mitigation fees

06:18 1 now for hold ups?

06:18 2 Seventy-four million a year would be needed
06:18 3 for a fleet -- a truck fleet. According to the
06:18 4 American Trucking Research Institute in 2012, it costs
06:19 5 \$180,000 a year to run a diesel truck.

06:19 6 Personnel is going to be expensive. Some of
06:19 7 them will be coming from Japan. There are also unknown
06:19 8 costs of upkeep, water, extra electricity, and petcoke.
06:19 9 Kind of wonder what they're going to charge for their
06:19 10 fertilizer to make a profit, or is the government going
06:19 11 to guarantee a profit?

06:19 12 Mr. Pozzuto, I was told that you came to
13 Buttonwillow on Monday saying that this is a great
06:19 14 project. You said that the government funding of
06:19 15 private, personal factories is business as usual. It
06:19 16 seems clear that you made up your mind to be in favor
06:19 17 of this factory before public comment was voiced. Why
06:19 18 did you force us to come to a meeting during harvest
06:19 19 time and fair time if you could have stayed in West
20 Virginia and finished your report?

06:19 21 Mr. Pozzuto, would you have bought your house
06:20 22 in Pennsylvania if a plant like HECA -- if you were
06:20 23 downwind from a plant like HECA?

06:20 24 MR. POZZUTO: I live downwind from several
06:20 25 power plants. They're not as clean as HECA, and that's

1 all I'm going to comment on that. But since you asked
2 me directly, I thought I'd answer you directly.

06:20 3 MS. DOUGLAS: I appreciate your answer. So
06:20 4 if they built one in your town, you would say it was
06:20 5 a good project, too, huh?

06:20 6 I want to tell you that every person is just
7 -- being a net in Kern County, is going to be downwind
06:20 8 from HECA. The pollution from the factory will be
06:20 9 just -- will just circle around and come back on itself
06:20 10 until this whole end of the Valley is filled with it.

06:20 11 Thank you.

06:20 12 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Douglas.

06:21 13 The next person to speak will be
06:21 14 a Sam Ackerman.

06:21 15 MR. ACKERMAN: I'm Sam Ackerman. Most of you
06:21 16 don't know me, but I've been a resident for the last
06:21 17 30 years. As a matter of fact, I lived on the very
18 piece of property that this -- this fence is going to
06:21 19 wind up being in. I farmed it for a number of years;
06:21 20 so I know the land. And I make my home there.

06:21 21 Since then, I've moved on in this -- recent
06:21 22 times, and I got into engineering and into
06:21 23 construction. And I have a general engineering degree.
06:21 24 I have a general building contractor's license, an
25 electrical contractor, and I'm also licensed in the

06:21 1 Republican state of Texas.

06:22 2 And one of my main businesses is converting
06:22 3 coal plants into alternative fuel. I'm saying all this
06:22 4 just to say that I might have a little bit more insight
06:22 5 into what's going on here.

06:22 6 And I have been affected. My home is right
06:22 7 where that plant is going to be. So this plant is
06:22 8 a great project. It's a lot of money going to be spent
06:22 9 here. It's going to provide wonderful jobs. I'd say
06:22 10 the average wage is going to be somewhere north of 30
06:22 11 bucks an hour and probably a lot more that with
06:22 12 benefits. And it's going to go on for years and a lot
13 of permanent jobs.

06:22 14 Also, it's going to provide, really,
06:22 15 fertilizer for the entire state of California. The way
06:22 16 it is now right now, I don't know if you know where
06:22 17 we're getting our fertilizer from. It comes from the
06:23 18 other side of the world. It comes from Arabia, Saudi
06:23 19 Arabia, Middle East, places on the other side of the
06:23 20 globe. They ship it all the way across the world to
21 get here. What's the position about that? What's the
06:23 22 pollution in that process, you know, shipping it all
06:23 23 the way across and -- across the United States to get
06:23 24 here. And we're servicing countries that hate us. We
06:23 25 ought to make it here.

06:23 1 And as far as the pollution thing goes, I
06:23 2 don't know if you guys realize it, but, you know,
06:23 3 I convert coal plants to bio fuel because they've been
06:23 4 outlawed here. This is a turning point. The only
06:23 5 product of hydrogen and oxygen is heat and water. So
06:23 6 there's no pollution in that process.

06:23 7 But for every truckload of coal that doesn't
06:24 8 make it to our power plants in California comes to
06:24 9 California anyway. It comes right here to the
06:24 10 San Joaquin Valley. It comes to the port of Stockton
06:24 11 that's just right up wind. And it's loaded train,
06:24 12 after train, after train, after train. I've got
06:24 13 pictures. It all comes here. It's in the open air.
06:24 14 The dust is everywhere. This air comes right down to
15 us anyway. We don't know where it's being shipped. We
06:24 16 can't burn it here as fuel. It's put on ships and
06:24 17 shipped halfway across the world to China where they're
06:24 18 burning it in their power plants. Their power plants
19 don't have any scrubbers like in California. You know,
06:24 20 global warming or global pollution, well, it's
06:24 21 wholesale over there.

06:24 22 And what's more San Francisco really recently
06:24 23 has been complaining about all the pollution in China
06:25 24 coming over through their town. And where's their
06:25 25 town? They're just right out of Stockton. That air

06:25 1 passes right through the San Joaquin Valley. We're
06:25 2 going to breath and air anyway. So this pollution
06:25 3 thing is bogus completely, and, anyway, I'm -- I'm in
06:25 4 complete favor of it. It's a great project. It's
06:25 5 going to create a lot of great jobs for a lot of people
06:25 6 for a very long time, and we need the energy to boot.

06:25 7 So thank you. That's my statement.

06:25 8 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Ackerman.

06:25 9 The next person is Jaime Briceno with the
10 Cement Masons Local 600.

11 MR. BRICENO: Good afternoon. My name is
12 Jaime Briceno. I'm representing today the building
06:25 13 masons, and I am sure a lot of the leaders will be
06:25 14 right behind me saying the same thing, but I get to say
06:26 15 it first.

06:26 16 First of all, the employment rate in Kern
06:26 17 County is somewhere south of 12 percent and prior to
06:26 18 2008, we had a great boom in Kern County. And I was
06:26 19 thinking about it this morning how in those eight
06:26 20 years, we built -- we needed the building space. The
06:26 21 population in Kern County was growing. We built almost
06:26 22 24 elementary and junior high schools, four high
23 schools.

06:26 24 And yesterday I spoke about responsible
06:26 25 building where growth and the environment come together

06:26 1 and we hash it out. We talked about it like we're
06:26 2 doing right here, and it needs built. I talked about
06:26 3 the four power plants about La Loma, Elk Hills,
06:26 4 Sunrise, and Sunset.

06:26 5 And by the way prior to the power plants
06:26 6 being built, 35 years had passed and California had not
06:26 7 built one power plant in California. They were built
06:27 8 here. And then, too, we had the meetings and the
06:27 9 opposition and we were all going to die. We are still
06:27 10 here. The air has gotten cleaner.

06:27 11 Now going back to the economic part of it for
06:27 12 us, employment, it's huge, not just in the Union
06:27 13 sector, in all sectors. This project is going to
06:27 14 supply at least two years for us in the building of the
06:27 15 plant. But never mind to what has already been said,
06:27 16 but they also are running the plants. Good paying
06:27 17 jobs. And there's no one in this room that could say
06:27 18 to you that I want to make 10 bucks an hour for the
06:27 19 rest of my life. Or God forbid we -- you do something
06:27 20 else for a living that just pays minimum wage. No one
06:27 21 can stand for that.

06:27 22 And also the economic impact on Kern County.
23 And when it comes to the growth, again -- and I already
06:27 24 said it before -- responsible growth with the input of
06:28 25 the community and the environmental studies. And it's

06:28 1 your plant.

06:28 2 I mean, think about this. They've been
06:28 3 permitted. Everything they had to be done
06:28 4 scientifically, up to this point, it came down to it.
06:28 5 And in the future -- by the way, if you don't know
06:28 6 this, in the future if we come up with something better
06:28 7 than scrubbers, they're going to make the time to out
06:28 8 that onto their stats. This doesn't end just with
06:28 9 today. I think the air quality will get better with
10 responsible projects like this and responsible support.

06:28 11 Thank you very much.

06:28 12 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Jaime.

06:28 13 The next person to speak is a Ron James from
06:28 14 the Operating Engineers Local No. 12.

06:28 15 MR. JAMES: How are you? Ron James,
06:28 16 Operating Engineers Local 12. We support this project.
17 We have members that have been out of work for a long
06:28 18 time. They need the work, and other operating
06:28 19 engineers around this area, you know, they run
06:29 20 excavators, backhoes. They do dirt work, and this
06:29 21 project would really be a great thing for the economy.
06:29 22 We need the energy.

06:29 23 And really I don't know what else to say. I
06:29 24 mean, I've been to both of these meetings that
06:29 25 everything pretty well has already been said. But this

06:29 1 is a good project for us, a good project for Kern
06:29 2 County, and hopefully we can get this thing built.

06:29 3 Thank you.

06:29 4 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ron. Next person is
06:29 5 a Carl Wyatt.

06:29 6 MR. WYATT: Good evening. I'm Carl Wyatt.

7 I'm an apprenticeship coordinator and instructor for
06:29 8 the Operating Engineers. I've been in the training
06:29 9 process for 26 years now. What a project like this
06:29 10 does is it brings in jobs so we can train people. We
06:30 11 do not train them for a project. We train them for
06:30 12 a career. We hire locally. All of our applications
06:30 13 are taken in Kern County, Inyo and (unintelligible)
06:30 14 County. I've had plenty of apprentices in the past
06:30 15 from all over Kern County, including Buttonwillow, and
06:30 16 we hope this job comes through so we can -- we have
06:30 17 a lot of people who are retiring -- getting older and
06:30 18 retiring. We need to replace our work force.

06:30 19 As I said earlier, there's going to be road
06:30 20 work connected with this, the infrastructure, and we
06:30 21 need people to be able to do these jobs at a livable
22 wage.

06:30 23 Thank you.

06:30 24 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Wyatt.

06:30 25 I have a card here that doesn't have a name

06:30 1 on it, but they're with the International Association
06:30 2 of Heat and Frost Insulators. There is no name on the
06:31 3 card, so please make your name known.

06:31 4 MR. DANIELS: Sorry about that. My name is
06:31 5 Jim Daniels. I'm with the Heat and Frost Insulators of
06:31 6 Southern Californian.

06:31 7 What this project is really about is the
06:31 8 economical growth of Kern County, the future of
06:31 9 California. And I see a lot of young people around
06:31 10 here. And I see (unintelligible) working for \$10 an
06:31 11 hour, and we're very happy about that. How are people
12 going to be able to buy houses with that in the future?
06:31 13 It's going to provide jobs right now.

06:31 14 We -- my Union personally doesn't have a lot
06:31 15 of people up here, but we do have a few. What that's
06:31 16 going to do is that's going to provide opportunities
17 for other people to come into our apprenticeship, make
06:31 18 a decent wage, and be able buy houses here in
06:31 19 Kern County and help the economic growth.

06:31 20 Another thing I want to talk about is helmets
06:31 21 to hard hats. All of the Unions support helmets to
22 hard hats. I'm sure we've got plenty of veterans
06:31 23 coming back from these -- call them wars that we're
06:31 24 having over seas -- and they are going to need to
06:32 25 obtain jobs. They deserve good paying jobs for

06:32 1 defending our freedom. That's about all I have to say.

2 And I hope this project goes through.

06:32 3 Thank you very much.

06:32 4 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you very much

06:32 5 Mr. Daniels.

06:32 6 The next person is a Gene Clark with

06:32 7 Local No. 5.

06:32 8 MR. CLARK: I'm Gene Clark. I'm an insulator

06:32 9 for Local 5. I was born and raised in the Valley, went

06:32 10 through my apprenticeship here, and I'm getting pretty

06:32 11 far along in my career now. But we will need

06:32 12 apprentices if project goes through and there's been --

06:32 13 and as far as I know, they're not in the Valley here.

06:32 14 So there will have to be new apprentices.

06:32 15 It's been a good job and a good career for

06:32 16 me. I made a living doing it. Bought a house here.

06:32 17 Like I said, I was born and raised here. So I would

06:32 18 like to see somebody else take this up and make

06:32 19 a living out of it.

06:33 20 Thank you.

06:33 21 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Clark.

06:33 22 Sarah Goatcher from Tupman.

06:33 23 MS. GOATCHER: Hello. Thank you. Hi.

06:33 24 How wrong is wrong? Well, here are reasons

06:33 25 to forget it, HECA. Severe added air pollution;

06:33 1 outrageous, inexcusable water abuse; very dangerous
06:33 2 toxic chemicals for a 20-year run totally polluting the
06:34 3 surrounding farmlands and their future progress in
06:34 4 crops; drastically filling up all of our landfills with
06:34 5 their toxic waste; not enough local jobs to justify
06:34 6 building it in Kern County creating a dangerous
06:34 7 condition on our roads for some very horrible blood
06:34 8 alley situation; a very possible condition for a
06:34 9 catastrophic blowup disaster like this country has
06:34 10 never seen before. Waco will look like a fake
06:34 11 firecracker.

12 Several earthquake faults lie close to the
06:34 13 area of construction. They have back paddled on many
06:34 14 subjects saying opposing views on their own documents.
06:34 15 I call that a "confused flour unit."

06:34 16 "Did I eat it, or did I spit it out? Oh,
06:35 17 never mind. I'll just go get some more money from the
06:35 18 government and buy me some more flour."

06:35 19 Thank you.

06:35 20 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Goatcher.

06:35 21 Next person is Brandon Higgins.

06:35 22 Brandon Higgins

06:35 23 MR. HIGGINS: My name is Brandon Higgins, and
06:35 24 I was in the audience last night. And I just wanted to
25 take the opportunity to make a point.

06:35 1 We make it real hard for new projects like
06:35 2 HECA to come in and be built. I don't -- don't want
06:35 3 to, like, undermine the significance of environmental
06:35 4 impact reports and safety tests. But they've been
06:35 5 approved and jumped through all the hoops that we've
06:35 6 made them jump through thus far, and people still ot
06:35 7 want to see them be built.

06:35 8 I trust the California Energy Commission and
06:36 9 the Department of Energy will make an impartial
06:36 10 decision, as I'm sure you're all aware of, as much as
06:36 11 the opposition has used emotional appeals against this
06:36 12 project. I hope you guys use the facts, facts like
06:36 13 discovered in the air quality and public health studies
06:36 14 that were conducted and found that no negative effects
06:36 15 to animals, crops, vegetation, and public health will
06:36 16 occur.

06:36 17 Alternative energy is the only option for a
06:36 18 sustainable future. I'm sure the majority of the
06:36 19 people in this room have kids and grand kids. I do
06:36 20 not. I don't see us having a sustainable society in
06:36 21 the future. However, I would like that opportunity to
06:36 22 change. I feel like projects like HECA are a right
06:36 23 place to start. So if emotional appeals work, I hope
06:36 24 my possible future family might appeal to your nature.

06:37 25 Thank you.

06:37 1 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Higgins.

06:37 2 Next person to speak is a Jacob Brown.

06:37 3 MR. BROWN: Good evening. My name is Jacob,

06:37 4 and I'm here to support the HECA project. I have

06:37 5 lived in Bakersfield all my life, and since being

6 called, I have striven to become more attentive to

06:37 7 things going on in my community.

06:37 8 After initially hearing about the HECA

06:37 9 project, I was intrigued and decided to look more into

06:37 10 it. I know there are a lot of people opposed to the

06:37 11 project. But I just wanted to come up here and voice

12 my support.

06:37 13 I think the HECA project has proven

06:37 14 themselves so far because they have been permitted by

06:37 15 our Air Pollution and Control District and have added

06:37 16 an option for a rail spur to help ease people's fear of

06:37 17 potential road damage and pollution from trucks.

06:37 18 We have to come up with sustainable options

06:38 19 for energy -- energy production. This project is

06:38 20 exactly that. I represent a younger generation who is

06:38 21 ready to make changes for the better. Please help us

06:38 22 get there by supporting this project.

06:38 23 Thank you.

06:38 24 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Brown.

06:38 25 The next person to speak is

06:38 1 a Veronica Willyard.

06:38 2 MS. WILLYARD: Last night I heard a lot of
06:38 3 talk that HECA will make Kern County's pollution worse.
06:38 4 I don't believe that to be true. As a community we
06:38 5 have worked hard to reduce air emissions over the last
06:38 6 few years which is absolutely something to be proud of.
06:38 7 There is no way that the San Joaquin Valley Air
06:38 8 Pollution and Control District would determine that the
06:38 9 HECA project is compliant with the State and Federal
06:38 10 air quality standards if it was not.

06:38 11 California has some of the strictest air
06:38 12 quality standards in the nation. Our local Air
06:38 13 Pollution Control District has conducted their studies
06:39 14 and determined that there will be no significantly
06:39 15 negative affects on health for the people living near
16 the proposed plant.

06:39 17 I'm am glad to take part in this Democrat
06:39 18 process. Part of the Democratic process involves all
06:39 19 that testing the Air Pollution and Control District has
06:39 20 already done. They know what they are doing and have
06:39 21 helped to reduce our bad air quality already. We
06:39 22 should trust them.

06:39 23 Thank you.

06:39 24 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Willyard.

06:39 25 Next person is a Vanessa Wilson.

06:39 1 Vanessa Wilson.

06:39 2 MS. WILSON: Hi. My name is Vanessa, and
06:39 3 I support the HECA project because it has direct
06:39 4 benefits to the economy. It is going to help provide
06:39 5 over 2400 construction jobs, 200 permanent jobs, and
06:39 6 all the taxes will go back into our community. If it
06:39 7 weren't enough, just think of all the other ways the
06:40 8 project will benefit Kern County, HECA employees will
06:40 9 be able to spend more and will probably shop locally,
06:40 10 and all the sales taxes will go back to Kern County.

06:40 11 Also, the enhanced oil recovery components
06:40 12 will likely provide new work at Occidental Elk Hills
06:40 13 Oil Reserve. And if you approve the well spur, which
06:40 14 I hope you do, then there will be more more jobs for
06:40 15 people to operate it.

06:40 16 Thank you.

06:40 17 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Wilson.

06:40 18 Next person, is a Janet Hylton.

19 Janet Hylton?

06:40 20 MS. HYLTON: Good evening. My name is
06:40 21 Janet Hylton, and I am here to support the HECA
22 project.

06:40 23 HECA tends to reuse the gasified solids
06:40 24 instead of disposing of them. In fact, none of the
06:40 25 plants lag and will dispose of it in Kern County. I

06:40 1 was curious about their plans for reuse and found out
06:40 2 that HECA conducted a study on how efficiency is used
3 with the product that's left over in the gasifying
06:41 4 process. It turns out that they had used -- that they
06:41 5 can be used for roofing granules, blasting brick,
06:41 6 cement-use, Readymix -- all of which will be sold in no
06:41 7 more than 300 miles of Kern County further benefitting
06:41 8 the Central Valley.

06:41 9 This is a prime example of how business
06:41 10 should be done. Business and related industries have
06:41 11 to work together to find ways -- to find a way to do
06:41 12 this and take care of the environment while conducting
06:41 13 their business. This is the future, and I welcome it.

06:41 14 Thank you.

06:41 15 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Hylton.

06:41 16 Next person is a Rogelio Caudillo.

06:42 17 You want to repeat that? I'm sure I messed
18 it up.

19 MR. CAUDILLO: Rogelio Caudillo.

06:42 20 MR. POZZUTO: Very good. Hold on one second.

06:42 21 MR. CAUDILLO: Thank you very much for
06:42 22 allowing me to express my opinion.

06:42 23 I was born here in Kern County. I went to
06:42 24 school here, and I've worked here. And all of my life
06:42 25 that I've been here, I've noticed that we are almost

06:43 1 always ignored.

06:43 2 I see this project as an opportunity to bring
06:43 3 more development in our community. I understand
06:43 4 everything that has happened in the pollution and the
06:43 5 air. I also have many family members that have
06:43 6 suffered from problems as a result of the pollution in
06:43 7 the air. And I have also suffered from that.

06:43 8 But actually what's happening here is it
06:43 9 seems like we're trying to punish this project for
06:44 10 something that has already happened. These problems
06:44 11 are going to continue whether this project is fulfilled
06:44 12 or not when this project and this company is trying to
06:44 13 bring new technology to help the environment; and it's
06:44 14 also going to bring more jobs, more money, and more
06:44 15 focus on our infrastructure in this area. And that's
06:44 16 why I support this project. That's it.

06:44 17 Thank you.

06:44 18 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Caudillo.

06:45 20 Erica Salazar.

06:45 21 MS. SALAZAR: Hello. Commission, staff, my
06:45 22 name is Erica Salazar, and I'm here to voice my support
23 for the Hydrogen Energy California Project.

06:45 24 I've heard a lot of talk about how this
06:45 25 project is going to use up a bunch of Kern County's

06:45 1 water, and I did some research on my own. And after a
06:45 2 few minutes of reading, I found the assumption is just
06:45 3 false.

06:45 4 HECA has signed an agreement with the
5 Buena Vista Water Storage District to purchase
06:45 6 brackish, non-potable water. This kind of water has
06:45 7 a high (unintelligible) that dissolves the solids that
06:45 8 isn't good for farming. The Water Storage District has
06:45 9 even stated that HECA's use of the brackish water is
06:45 10 welcomed and is part of their remediation program.

06:45 11 Since the Buena Vista Water Storage District
06:45 12 has welcomed HECA, I think any opposition in regards to
06:45 13 water use is invalid. These are water professionals
06:45 14 who know what they were doing, and we should trust
15 them.

16 I ask that you all allow this project to
06:45 17 continue on their path to success and approve a permit
06:46 18 for the project. Do not be fooled that the opposition
06:46 19 may be louder at times, but there is a lot of support
06:46 20 for this project in Kern County.

06:46 21 Thank you.

06:46 22 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Salazar.

06:46 23 The next person to speak is a Tom Frantz.

06:46 24 MR. FRANTZ: Good evening. Tom Frantz from
25 Shafter.

06:46 1 One thing, Mr. Pozzuto, you need to consider
06:46 2 with this project is environmental justice. I think by
06:46 3 law you have to consider that.

06:46 4 This area is heavily impacted with some of
06:46 5 the worst, dirtiest activities in the state, such as
06:46 6 the hazardous waste dump a couple miles that way,
06:46 7 accepting I don't know how many thousands of tons of
06:46 8 hazardous waste from the western U.S., just up I-5 is a
06:47 9 chemical plant in Kettleman City, as well, just -- just
06:47 10 upwind of us here.

06:47 11 Also, in three different directions you can
06:47 12 find three sites here in Kern County accepting together
06:47 13 a couple million tons of sewage last year from out of
06:47 14 the area, from L.A. Further north, they get sewer
06:47 15 sludge in the Valley from the Bay area. Why does all
06:47 16 this happen here? Why do we get the worst kind of
06:47 17 jobs, the worst kind of industry that pollute our air
18 in the work place. And -- and we have an area that
06:47 19 carries the fact that there's very little locally
06:47 20 produced air pollution, you know, the way the mountains
06:47 21 are and stuff.

06:47 22 And we suffer. We have the worst health in
06:47 23 California on average, everything from, you know, the
06:47 24 asthma and the breathing problems and the heart and
06:47 25 lung disease and the cancer, and the premature birth

06:48 1 weights, low birth rates -- we have all of that stuff.
06:48 2 We have the highest, and a lot of it's attributed both
06:48 3 to our environment, especially the high levels of air
06:48 4 pollution.

06:48 5 So why does it all come here? It's
06:48 6 environmental justice. Low income people, uneducated
06:48 7 people, and people of color who are trying to
06:48 8 assimilate in this society do not have much or little
06:48 9 say in what may hang around.

06:48 10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Uneducated people?

06:48 11 MR. FRANTZ: On the average.

06:48 12 MR. POZZUTO: Excuse me, Miss. No
06:48 13 interruptions.

14 MR. FRANTZ: You should give me another 30
15 seconds.

06:48 16 This phenomenon, environmental justice, is
06:48 17 well-known, that the dirtiest plants and industries
06:48 18 locate next to the lowest income communities across the
06:49 19 nation where the people don't have the political power
06:49 20 to say "no." The CDC could not even approve a plant a
06:49 21 couple of years ago in Chula Vista because of the
06:49 22 political power of the local residents. At least
06:49 23 that's the way it looks. It's very rare for that to
06:49 24 happen.

06:49 25 This plant -- was this project was blasted

06:49 1 politically, chased out of Long Beach, which is where
06:49 2 they wanted to go. People of Long Beach wouldn't have
06:49 3 it. It sounded way to dangerous, way to polluted.
06:49 4 It's an environmental justice issue that the project is
06:49 5 considering this part of the state to locate in, and
06:49 6 you have to consider that. You have to consider the
06:49 7 cumulative effect of all this other stuff.

06:49 8 We get garbage from L.A. We get landfill
06:49 9 diversion from L.A. to be incinerated up here already,
06:49 10 millions of tons per year carried by trucks. Now we're
06:49 11 going to get the waste from refineries and coal from
06:50 12 out of state just because they can do it, just because
06:50 13 we don't have the political will to say "no." We're
06:50 14 too poor; we want the jobs too badly. We'll take all
06:50 15 the bad stuff with it.

06:50 16 It's environmental justice you have to look
06:50 17 at as well as all the other stuff.

06:50 18 Thank you.

06:50 19 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Tom.

06:50 20 Michael Lehmann.

06:50 21 MR. LEHMANN: My name is Michael Lehmann, and
06:50 22 I have lived here for many years, now retired.

06:50 23 This project has been discussed and hashed
06:50 24 over for many, many years. It's been moved.

06:50 25 Everybody worries about the air that happens

06:50 1 in Kern County. Arvin just got better air. It comes
06:51 2 out that it has better air now. The gentleman talked
06:51 3 about the power plants that were build here a few years
4 ago. Not a problem there. We still have good air.
5 It's getting better.

06:51 6 This project is a clean air project. I've
06:51 7 been in negotiations with this company before
06:51 8 I retired. They've assured us that they will make it
06:51 9 as safe as possible.

06:51 10 The gentleman earlier talked about the future
06:51 11 his family. It's time for me to step down. The things
06:51 12 that worked years ago don't work. We know that.
06:51 13 That's why we have the bad air. It's a clean air
06:51 14 project. It's going to stimulate the area. If we
15 don't accept here and do it and do it now, they're
06:51 16 going move upstream. And guess what? We're still
06:52 17 going to get what ever little bad air we're going to
06:52 18 get which probably isn't enough to worry about.

06:52 19 If you want to worry about it, worry about
06:52 20 how they shake all the almonds out there. My grandson
06:52 21 can't breathe. Every time they go out there and pick
06:52 22 the cotton, my grandson can't breath. Build the
06:52 23 project.

06:52 24 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Lehmann.

06:52 25 Raymond Martinez.

06:52 1 MR. R. MARTINEZ: Good evening, everybody.

06:52 2 I just want to say that we didn't inherit this from our

06:52 3 ancestors. We're borrowing it from our children. And

06:53 4 I also want to say it's all about money. I'm in favor

06:53 5 of this project.

06:53 6 Thank you very much.

06:53 7 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Raymond.

06:53 8 MR. R. MARTINEZ: I got your people covered

06:53 9 right here, homie. Peace out.

06:53 10 MR. POZZUTO: Let's try to keep this

11 professional, respectful.

06:53 12 The next person is a Blake Gorman.

06:53 13 MR. GORMAN: Hello. Good evening, CEC and

06:53 14 DOE. Staff, my name is a Blake Gorman, and I am

06:53 15 a resident of Shafter, California. I would like

16 express my support for the Hydrogen Energy California

17 project.

06:54 18 As a lifelong resident of the Central Valley,

06:54 19 I know what dirty air quality is about and how this

06:54 20 impacts our air quality of life. What I don't get is

06:54 21 the opposition blaming a proposed project for the

06:54 22 current bad air. Do they really know? Have they

23 produced studies by a third-party, credible agency?

06:54 24 Please don't be fooled by the opposition.

06:54 25 HECA is a good idea for Kern for all the right reasons.

06:54 1 Thank you.

06:54 2 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Gorman.

06:54 3 Brent Martinez.

06:54 4 MR. B. MARTINEZ: Good evening, everybody.

06:54 5 My name is Brent Martinez. I came out here to support

06:54 6 my opinion of the HECA project. I believe it will

06:55 7 create a lot of jobs. It will be great for the

06:55 8 environment. There hasn't been much talk about any

06:55 9 critical pollution being exhausted out, so I'm in

06:55 10 support of it.

06:55 11 Thank you.

06:55 12 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Martinez.

06:55 13 Jackie Flores.

06:55 14 Set that card aside and make a last call at

06:55 15 the end.

06:55 16 Jackie Flores.

06:55 17 MS. FLORES: Hello. My name is Jackie

06:55 18 Flores, and live in Bakersfield. I have my whole life.

19 I wanted to speak to you about the Hydrogen Energy

06:55 20 California project and the need to approve and permit

06:55 21 this project.

06:55 22 HECA has been completely transparent through

06:55 23 this whole process and have listened to residents'

06:56 24 concerns. This is not just about jobs and economy.

06:56 25 While important but also approving a power plant that

06:56 1 is clean and will help contribute to the growing
06:56 2 California economy with much needed energy.

06:56 3 On another issue opponents argue that the
06:56 4 crops will be contaminated by coal, but that is not
06:56 5 true. HECA's completed public health model studies
06:56 6 that proves that nearby crops a soil won't be
06:56 7 negatively affected. Please approve this project.

06:56 8 Thank you.

06:56 9 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Flores.

06:56 10 Veronica Campos.

06:56 11 MS. CAMPOS: Hello. My name
06:56 12 is Veronica Campos, and I support the HECA project. As
06:56 13 many have said, the direct economic benefits of this
06:56 14 project are fairly obvious. I believe someone before
06:56 15 said it would provide over 2000 jobs and 200 of those
06:56 16 jobs will be permanent. It will take -- local tax for
06:57 17 sales will go back into our economy. I hope they
06:57 18 recommend approval of this project because our county
06:57 19 can really benefit from a project like this. Let's not
06:57 20 let this opportunity pass us by.

06:57 21 Thank you.

06:57 22 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Campos.

06:57 23 Cassie Pedersen.

06:57 24 MS. PEDERSEN: Hi. I'm Cassie Pedersen.
06:57 25 I just want to start out by saying that I have two

06:57 1 nephews. One is 11 months old, and he had to have
06:57 2 surgery today because his allergies are so bad. I have
06:57 3 heard the opposing side say they show up and use
06:57 4 Kern County as a guinea pig because it's the first
06:57 5 project of it's kind.

06:57 6 Well, the experiment in technology has been
06:57 7 proven to work. The technology that HECA will use has
06:57 8 been demonstrated as safe and reliable in various
06:57 9 places all over the world. This project could make
06:57 10 Kern County a leader in carbon mitigation and global
06:58 11 warming solutions. We can't just pretend that we're
06:58 12 working or that we're currently doing this for energy
06:58 13 that is sustainable. It's not.

06:58 14 Let us progress and support projects like
06:58 15 HECA and help your younger generations.

06:58 16 Thank you.

06:58 17 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Pedersen.

06:58 18 Chris Harper.

06:58 19 MS. HARPER: Hi. My name is Chris. I was
06:58 20 born and raised in Bakersfield. I don't really think
06:58 21 that there's anything I can say tonight that hasn't
06:58 22 already been said by everybody else, but I were to
06:58 23 highlight some of the things, it would be the economic
06:58 24 impact. If anything, it's going to provide jobs, and
06:58 25 those jobs are going to provide people with more money

06:58 1 to then go buy more things and help the economy.

06:58 2 But beyond that, there's been a lot of talk
06:59 3 about pollution and whatnot, but, really, Kern County
06:59 4 has made its fortune off of the oil in general. This
06:59 5 is something new; this is something different, and in
06:59 6 my opinion this is certainly a lot better than
7 hydrocracking.

06:59 8 But as we talked about before, the Buena
06:59 9 Vista Water District has welcomed HECA. I think any
06:59 10 opposition in regards to water use is kind of just null
06:59 11 and void because the water they'll be using in the
06:59 12 first place is already refuse, non-potable water in the
06:59 13 first place. So yeah all in all, go HECA.

06:59 14 Thank you.

06:59 15 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Harper.

06:59 16 We have a Florentina Olvera. We also have
06:59 17 a Florirene Olvera. I'm not sure whether there's two
18 people? There's two people. Okay. Very good.

07:00 19 Florentina Olvera is first to speak.

07:00 20 MS. OLVERA: My name is Florentina Olvera.
07:00 21 Thank you. I thank you, both teams, for being here in
07:00 22 favor of project for HECA. I support the project
07:00 23 because it's going to bring clean jobs being that we're
07:00 24 in a county that's very filthy. This project brings
07:01 25 jobs that do not protect us, bring in chemicals,

07:01 1 organic jobs that help us so that our children, our
07:01 2 grandchildren can live somewhat better than we do
07:01 3 because of all the chemicals that there are.

07:01 4 And I ask all of you who are representing
07:01 5 this project in favor and against it to think in our
07:01 6 future in our children and to support clean projects
07:01 7 here in Kern County.

07:01 8 Thank you.

07:01 9 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you very much, Ms.
07:01 10 Olvera.

07:01 11 The second Ms. Olvera. Florirene Olvera,
07:01 12 please.

07:01 13 MS. OLVERA: My name Florirene Olvera, and
07:02 14 I'm here to voice my support for the Hydrogen Energy
07:02 15 California project. I think the people that opposed
07:02 16 HECA are just afraid of change. I get it, but the
07:02 17 world is moving on, and we have to help out our future
07:02 18 generations by allowing projects like this to find new
07:02 19 ways to make energy that doesn't choose to lead to
07:02 20 global warming.

07:02 21 I ask you -- I ask you that you approve the
07:02 22 permit and permit HECA. Our future generations will
07:02 23 thank you.

07:02 24 Thank you.

07:02 25 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Olvera.

07:02 1 Sophia Gomez.

07:02 2 MS. GOMEZ: Hello. Good evening. My name is

07:02 3 Sophia Gomez, and I'm here to tell you about the

4 residents' need for the project for Kern County's

5 economy.

07:03 6 Our unemployment rate is extremely high in

07:03 7 the county. It seems that every time I'm on the

07:03 8 Internet or open a piece of paper, I'm hearing

07:03 9 something about homeless people or unemployment now is

07:03 10 extremely out of control. So let us do it.

07:03 11 HECA has been said that their goals are to

07:03 12 hire local employees, and Kern County needs this. Our

07:03 13 construction industry is better able to help others for

07:03 14 with jobs, getting people for jobs. It's not only

07:03 15 going to help individuals but their families, as well.

07:03 16 And this project is not going to be built in

07:03 17 a day or a month or several years, but this means that

18 for 2,000 local workers are going to be able to have a

07:03 19 long-term, stable job which something that isn't common

07:03 20 today.

07:03 21 So, please, do Kern County a favor and

22 support the HECA project. We really need this to help

07:03 23 our community to recover from these hard economic

07:03 24 times.

07:03 25 Thank you.

07:04 1 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Ms. Gomez.
07:04 2 Isidro Lopez.
07:04 3 MR. LOPEZ: I apologize to everyone because I
07:04 4 don't know how to speak good English.
07:04 5 But in my humble opinion, I've lived here in
07:04 6 this Valley for 40 years, working in the fields. So I
07:04 7 don't know if we are in agreement or not that if the
07:04 8 fields are not in production, no one survive, being
07:04 9 that all of us, what we consume on your tables comes
07:04 10 from the fields.
07:04 11 So this project is something that's being
07:04 12 processed. Some are in favor some are against. So
07:05 13 what's obvious is that we all have different methods of
07:05 14 thinking. So the only thing that I ask you is to do
07:05 15 your job honestly and to feel happy and contented with
07:05 16 the decision you make and the one that can be most
07:05 17 correct.
07:05 18 Thank you.
07:05 19 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Lopez.
07:05 20 Joel McKenna.
07:05 21 MR. McKENNA: Hi. My name is Joel. I've
07:05 22 been living in Kern County for about close to 10 years
07:05 23 and kind of my first feeling that came up when I heard
07:05 24 about this project was kind of like what a dog does
07:05 25 when it doesn't know anything, like a person that's

07:05 1 coming into the neighborhood. Like, who is this
2 person? What are they doing? And all of these
07:06 3 questions come to mind.

07:06 4 Now, I'm neither for or against it because I
5 really don't know much about it. And so I was talking
07:06 6 about it last night, and the first thing I was thinking
07:06 7 was coming here.

07:06 8 It's -- I'm not a college-educated person,
07:06 9 but there's a lot of, I mean, feelings I have about
07:06 10 introducing a waste stream into a particular area.
07:06 11 Now, I understand that the idea is to mitigate and to
07:06 12 process and create new jobs for people who don't
13 necessarily have a college education and, you know,
07:06 14 could potentially now have a good life.

07:06 15 Now, the other part of my strong feelings is
07:06 16 that my kids would be going to school next door to this
07:06 17 project. Now, that's speaking to the future. I mean,
07:06 18 Needless to say, I just don't know enough. My main
07:06 19 question is: Chemistry is very complicated. So when
07:07 20 you are introducing a lot of different chemical into a
07:07 21 living organism like a community, you want to make sure
07:07 22 that you're making all the managerial decisions to make
07:07 23 the ideal situation, what you want, which is to convert
07:07 24 potentially dangerous chemicals into something it's
25 not.

07:07 1 So my main question is: How much of this
07:07 2 project are you guys going to spend to make sure that
07:07 3 that happens? Now, I said "catalyst," and catalyst is
07:07 4 a general term. But, obviously, you're going to need
07:07 5 people to be emotionally involved. So this is a good
07:07 6 thing all these people are coming here for and against
07:07 7 it because they are voicing their opinion.

8 Now, there's also the technical side of it.
07:07 9 I'm sure that, you know, Occidental Petroleum or -- and
07:07 10 I -- and government and the CEC go through all the
07:08 11 steps to make sure that, you know -- I'm sure the
07:08 12 technology is great, but that they're actually putting
07:08 13 people's hearts and minds into this.

07:08 14 There's big money going into all this.
07:08 15 You're finding a way to get all this money and
07:08 16 resources and chemistry dealt with and that's going to
07:08 17 creat jobs. Then I hear about this fertilizer, and I'm
07:08 18 not too sure about that. That's where
19 (unintelligible).

07:08 20 All right. Well, if the electricity isn't
21 being produced by this power plant, forget the
07:08 22 economic, they'll find it. Then they start possibly
07:08 23 making more fertilizer, and "fertilizer" is a general
07:08 24 term. You want to make plants better. It will keep
07:08 25 people out in the field still growing plants, compared

07:08 1 to people who are in the audience.

07:08 2 Yeah, lots of questions. I don't know what

07:08 3 side to stand on, still.

07:08 4 Thank you.

07:09 5 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you for your concern.

07:09 6 And if you want to reads all the 2100 pages, it is

07:09 7 available in a couple of locations. So you were

07:09 8 welcome to read and get educated in that. And we will

07:09 9 get an answer for you on how much money is going to be

07:09 10 spent towards making this happen the way you feel it

07:09 11 should.

07:09 12 The next person is a Beau Antongiovanni.

07:09 13 MR. ANTONGIOVANNI: Sorry. It's

07:09 14 Beau Antongiovanni.

07:09 15 MR. POZZUTO: Could you repeat your last name

07:09 16 again?

07:09 17 MR. ANTONGIOVANNI: Beau Antongiovanni.

18 MR. POZZUTO: Okay. Thank you very much.

19 MR. ANTONGIOVANNI: You know, part of the

07:10 20 dispute the short-term economic benefit of a project

07:10 21 like this. And I don't think that any of us that are

07:10 22 opposed to it would do that. And it's, also, easy to

07:10 23 say that, you know, we could stop farming in almonds or

07:10 24 other crops to reduce the pollution in the Valley, and

07:10 25 I don't think we dispute that.

07:10 1 You know, we can -- I posed this question
07:10 2 last night. They told me how stupid it was, which I
 3 happen to agree with. But we could solve the air
07:10 4 pollution problem with just one fell swoop, and we
07:10 5 could quit farming the Valley. That would solve the
07:10 6 pollution problem. But then what would we all eat?

07:10 7 And the problem with this project is --
07:10 8 although it's nice to produce some amount of energy --
07:10 9 but the problem in the room, and we don't have all the
07:11 10 facts, the small amount of energy it would produce the
07:11 11 lights would still be on in this room and all over the
 12 state. So it's a very insignificant amount of energy
07:11 13 it would produce. And the byproduct of that whether
07:11 14 it's pollution or groundwater issues, the poor -- the
07:11 15 bad far outweigh any short-term economic benefit.

07:11 16 And furthermore, to -- you know, I agree it's
07:11 17 an economic issue, but -- I hate to lecture -- but
07:11 18 there's another idea here that is absolutely -- I mean,
07:11 19 it's a cancer that's going to destroy this country if
07:11 20 we don't begin to understand it. If the Federal
 21 Government continues to take money from the taxpayer
07:11 22 and then distribute it to a company like this, back
 23 into your -- back into your coffers for jobs, the --
07:12 24 the country will eventually go bankrupt. There's no --
07:12 25 it's just -- people spoke to it last night. It cannot

07:12 1 happen.

07:12 2 We do need projects similar to this. We have
07:12 3 projects similar to this with -- it relatively requires
07:12 4 no money from the Federal Government that are really
07:12 5 good ideas and that's why we produce as a county, more
07:12 6 electricity, more power than they ever tell you in the
07:12 7 state. And I think it's very important for the
07:12 8 audience to begin to understand that.

07:12 9 And I have something to say, I guess, in
07:12 10 defense of the Hispanic community.

07:12 11 Something happened last night that really
07:12 12 bothered me, and it's hard for me to get over. One of
07:12 13 the early speakers who I assume was going to be
07:12 14 a Spanish-speaking speaker, Mr. Pozzuto, first,
07:12 15 legitimately mispronounced her name -- maybe a second
07:13 16 or third time would legitimately mispronounce a name --
07:13 17 and then he made joke of it. I can't get over that. I
07:13 18 can't get over someone from the Federal Government,
07:13 19 someone who I work hard every day to pay your salary,
07:13 20 you come in my community and insult its members. That
07:13 21 is inexcusable. And I hope it goes to the highest
07:13 22 levels of whoever is overseen by you and something is
07:13 23 done about it because that's the exact reason why
07:13 24 people mistrust this process and mistrust the Federal
25 Government in this issue.

07:13 1 Thank you.

07:13 2 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Beau.

07:13 3 A Hertz Ramirez.

07:13 4 MR. RAMIREZ: Good evening, all. My name is
5 Hertz Ramirez. I'm a laborer relations representative
6 for the Laborers International Union of North America
7 Local 220.

07:13 8 That being said, as a Union member,
07:13 9 I strongly urge that the Department of Energy to move
07:14 10 forward with this project because it will provide great
07:14 11 paying jobs. Union jobs, construction jobs, we need at
07:14 12 the time that we are coming back from an economic
07:14 13 downturn, the worst we've seen yet since the Great
14 Depression. And I think this will be a great benefit
15 to the community.

07:14 16 That being said, as a taxpayer I think that
17 the Department of Energy and the Commission has done a
07:14 18 great job into looking into how well and efficient the
07:14 19 project's going to be built, and I just want to thank
07:14 20 you for that.

07:14 21 And, once again, I strongly urge you to move
07:14 22 forward with it.

07:14 23 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Ramirez.

07:14 24 Kaland Everett.

07:14 25 MR. EVERETT: My name is Kaland Everett, and

07:15 1 I am here to speak in support of the HECA project.
07:15 2 HECA intends to reuse the gas-firing solids instead of
3 disposing of them. In fact, numbers of plants will
4 likely be disposed of in Kern County.

5 I was curious about this plant for reuse and
07:15 6 found out that HECA conducted a study on how to
07:15 7 effectively reuse the products left over from the
07:15 8 gas-firing process. It turns out they can be used for
9 roofing and granules, blasting brick, cement to
07:15 10 ready-mix, all of which will be sold in no more than
07:15 11 300 miles of Kern County further benefitting the
07:15 12 Central Valley.

07:15 13 This is a prime example of how business
07:15 14 should be done. Business is a way for industry to work
07:15 15 together to find ways to find the wastestreams and take
16 care of the environment while conducting the business.
17 This is a good idea, and I welcome it.

07:16 18 Thank you.

07:16 19 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Everett.

07:16 20 Josh McAfee.

07:16 21 MR. McAFEE: My name is Josh McAfee, and I am
07:16 22 here tonight to speak on behalf of the HECA project.
07:16 23 Supposedly, HECA is a dirty coal plant. The word
07:16 24 "coal" just scares them. HECA will not be burning coal
07:16 25 through -- the gasifying process is a proven technology

07:16 1 Ninety percent of the carbon dioxide process will be
07:16 2 stored safely underground so that it's not released
07:16 3 into the atmosphere. It plans effectively, and
07:16 4 fertilizer will be made with a low-carbon footprint.
07:16 5 This project can put Kern County on the map for being a
07:16 6 global leader for carbon mitigation and is an answer
07:16 7 for global warming situations.

07:17 8 Thank you for your time.

07:17 9 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Josh.

07:17 10 Ernesto Garcia.

07:17 11 MR. GARCIA: Good evening, members of CSa and
07:17 12 the DOE. My name is Ernesto, and I am a resident of
07:17 13 Bakersfield. Today I've been here to express my
07:17 14 support for the HECA project. One of the things that
07:17 15 primarily I noticed it's the negativity of how it's
07:18 16 going to affect the environment.

07:18 17 First of all, I would like to remind everyone
07:18 18 that HECA received a preliminary decision -- with the
07:18 19 pollution -- the air pollution in the San Joaquin
07:18 20 Valley and the Air Control District in February, and
07:18 21 I feel that people have been forgetting that.

07:18 22 If you remember, California has the
07:18 23 regulation to the most strict for the air quality and
07:18 24 according to the Control Board of the air pollution of
07:18 25 the local district, HECA will not have any negative

07:18 1 impact that's significant on the Valley.

07:18 2 And, lastly, the assessment of the district
07:19 3 shows that HECA is complying, not just only with the
07:19 4 rules of our district but also with the ones of the
07:19 5 state and of the country. Please, don't be taken by
07:19 6 the opposition. HECA is a good idea for Kern County.
07:19 7 There are a lot of residents who would like to see it
07:19 8 go into effect.

07:19 9 Thank you.

07:19 10 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Garcia.

07:19 11 Edward Kosareff.

07:19 12 MR. KOSAREFF: Good evening. I'd like to
07:19 13 address one question either to the Applicant or to the
07:19 14 CEC or the DOE. If this plant is approved, who
07:20 15 indemnify our area and our crops in cases of
07:20 16 a disaster? Are all of you involved? Will the DOE
07:20 17 step up in case of some problem with land, water,
07:20 18 crops, to the tune of 500 million? Will CEC back us,
07:20 19 or will the HECA plant? That's a question.

07:20 20 MR. POZUTTO: We understand. As we've
07:20 21 stated, that's the kind question that we will have to
07:20 22 take some time and respond to all the comments in the
07:20 23 staff assessment for the final EIS.

07:21 24 MR. KOSAREFF: Our Applicant seems to be
25 quite quiet in this process, since they will be in

07:21 1 charge after the DOE backs out of the project. After
07:21 2 you stated the year or year and a half yesterday.

07:21 3 MR. POZZUTO: Pardon me.

07:21 4 MR. KOSAREFF: No comment, Applicant?

07:21 5 MR. POZZUTO: The DOE is working on this. It
6 wouldn't be appropriate for the Applicant to
7 participate. But if you want to come to the workshops
8 during the day, we're here all day, and I can assure
07:21 9 you that we are doing plenty of talking. And we'll be
07:21 10 doing the same thing tomorrow.

07:21 11 MR. KOSAREFF: And then furthermore, we -- we
07:21 12 hear from our Union neighbors that it's all about jobs
07:21 13 and that we have no scientific basis for opposition to
07:22 14 this project although it appears that our Applicant has
07:22 15 been able to purchase, with the help of the Federal
07:22 16 Government, credits that will allow them to go further.

07:22 17 So in other words, with deep pockets, they
07:22 18 were able to purchase pollution credit and build this
07:22 19 plant. I understand that since their purchase of such
07:22 20 things, they're not anything left for anybody else to
07:22 21 purchase for an expansion. There has been many, many
07:22 22 projects that have been built that are clean, the
07:22 23 expansion of agricultural projects in the case of
07:22 24 Paramount Farms, the one example that are not
07:23 25 polluting, that help the Union members to build these

07:23 1 projects and also to elevate the class of people that
07:23 2 work in this community with good paying jobs that don't
07:23 3 have to -- that can elevate themselves from the fields
07:23 4 into factory-type jobs.

07:23 5 But now with this HECA plant, if there's
07:23 6 something new that would like to be proposed, it's been
07:23 7 difficult for them to build because HECA's purchased up
07:23 8 much of these credits to continue.

07:23 9 so I want to impress upon the fact that
07:23 10 -- that -- and on the other hand, we have -- a stone's
07:23 11 throw from here, we swim in oil practically, to use a
07:23 12 phrase. And I know we have natural gas coming out of
07:24 13 our ears and that we can surely use all that natural
07:24 14 gas or part of it or half of it to construct natural
07:24 15 gas plants that will produce electricity, not
07:24 16 fertilizer, not produce the amount of CO2 that at the
07:24 17 beginning tells us that they aren't gonna -- they won't
07:24 18 produce 10 percent will be reduced -- will be released
07:24 19 in the environment at the get-go of this project.

07:24 20 And I understand, also, that our Union
07:24 21 members are telling us that the waste will be
07:24 22 transported 2- or 300 miles out of the area, but the
07:24 23 gentleman that's supposed to be handling this says that
07:25 24 Kern County and, more so, the Buttonwillow area is
07:25 25 becoming a toilet for this area with the disposal of

07:25 1 all kinds of hazardous waste.

07:25 2 MR. POZZUTO: Your time is up. Please,
07:25 3 finish in 30 seconds.

07:25 4 MR. KOSAREFF: Don't cut me off.

07:25 5 MR. POZZUTO: Mr. John Spaulding, please.

07:25 6 MR. SPAULDING: Thank you. My name is
07:25 7 John Spaulding, and I'm the executive secretary of
07:25 8 Kern County Building Trades. I spoke last night, and
07:26 9 I stayed for the entire time and listened to the
07:26 10 comments made by everyone. There was a couple, three
07:26 11 I wanted to readdress.

07:26 12 Obviously, my position is that I am in
07:26 13 support of this project 100 percent. It does provide
07:26 14 an opportunity for jobs in this area, and these are
07:26 15 good-paying jobs which will perpetuate the middle
07:26 16 class.

07:26 17 One of the questions last night -- one of the
07:26 18 speakers last night brought up the subject of roads,
07:26 19 and a concern for bus stops, and the traffic mitigation
07:26 20 and brought up several points. And there was never any
07:26 21 retort to that. But I attended a Board of Supervisors
07:26 22 meeting, and the road commissioner was there. And
07:26 23 he -- he and the Kern County Planning Department
07:26 24 brought it up -- Lorelei Oviatt brought all of the
07:26 25 impacts would happen. The hydrogen energy CEO stood up

07:27 1 and agreed 100 percent of what that impact was to
07:27 2 mitigate those. Those things have been addressed and
07:27 3 been agreed to.

07:27 4 They intend to be a good neighbor, and they
07:27 5 intend to abide by what is needed. The air has been
07:27 6 addressed. Our watchdog agency, the San Joaquin Valley
07:27 7 Air Pollution Control District, they've analyzed this
07:27 8 project. They've scrutinized it. They've stretched
07:27 9 it, pulled it every way they can go with it and have
07:27 10 given it the green light. They are the agency that we
11 rely on to improve the quality of our air in
07:27 12 Kern County, and they have given their support for this
07:27 13 project.

07:27 14 The Buena Vista Water Storage District has
07:27 15 given a green light on the brackish water. They have
07:27 16 a problem with brackish water right here in this area.
17 And they have an agreement with Hydrogen Energy, when
07:28 18 this project is built, that Hydrogen Energy will
07:28 19 purchase 700 acre-feet per year, and that will benefit
07:28 20 their ongoing remediation program which is to benefit
07:28 21 the water for agriculture.

07:28 22 It seemed to me that most of the opposition
07:28 23 was something new. This is new technology. This is
07:28 24 clean air technology. This is a power. This is
07:28 25 a whole process that's opened a lot of doors and a lot

1 of entrepreneurs will jump on this, and we don't know
07:28 2 how big this is going to be. But they chose
07:28 3 Kern County. And I think, from what I see, the
07:28 4 proximity to Elk Hills and Occidental Oil and the oil
07:28 5 remediation opened up a whole other realm of
07:28 6 opportunity for jobs in this area, and we support this
07:29 7 project a hundred percent.

07:29 8 Thank you.

07:29 9 MR. POZZUTO: Thank you, Mr. Spaulding.

07:29 10 Shayla Hull.

07:29 11 MS. HULL: Hi. I just wanted to come up here
07:29 12 and voice my support for the Hydrogen Energy California
07:29 13 project. There have been many emotional appeals with
07:29 14 regard to air quality. I don't know -- I'm sure we all
07:29 15 realize that's going on. The farmers also contribute
07:29 16 to asthma and particulate matter in this area. There's
07:29 17 a reason that some people (unintelligible) and pull out
07:29 18 (unintelligible) during our harvest season.

07:29 19 I'm really not trying to point fingers,
07:29 20 though. I just feel like it's not fair to blame it all
07:29 21 on HECA, to blame all of our air quality on HECA. They
22 have publicly commented and have been completely
07:29 23 transparent and have listened to all of our concerns
07:29 24 with utmost respect. I believe this project is a good
07:29 25 idea. Please permit it to be built.

07:30 1 Thank you.

07:30 2 MR. POZZUTO: Is Esther Flores still
07:30 3 interested in making comments? Esther Flores? Is
07:30 4 there anyone who has not commented? If you still want
5 to comment, please, go fill out a card.

07:30 6 I just want to emphasize that this is not the
07:30 7 end of the comment process for either DOE or CEC. We
07:30 8 will be accepting comments through either written,
07:30 9 oral, e-mail, and PSA/DEIS can submit comments. And,
07:30 10 of course, there's no limit on written comments that
07:30 11 you can submit to us; so this is not your last
07:30 12 opportunity. If you want to expand on the comments you
07:30 13 made tonight, you can also call or leave a voicemail.
07:31 14 Again, that number is in the PSA DEIS.

07:31 15 I want to thank everyone for coming out
07:31 16 tonight.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I make a comment.

07:31 18 MR. POZZUTO: If you can come to the
19 microphone, please state your name so MR. POZZUTO
07:31 20 reporter can transcribe it.

07:31 21 MR. ALVIDREZ: Hi, Commission. My name is
07:31 22 Joe Alvidrez. I spoke last night. You know, I was
07:31 23 sitting here talking, you know, just thinking about
24 what everybody -- about everything that was being said.
07:31 25 And I just want to make this comment.

07:31 1 You know, God made the farmer. God made them
07:31 2 stewards of the land, but God didn't give some farmers
07:31 3 the right to degrade their workers talk about how
07:31 4 uneducated they are and talk about their color of skin.
07:31 5 That's totally disrespectful, and I hope Tom Frantz
07:32 6 knows that. You know, he's pulled different antics
07:32 7 with the coal. It just shows his integrity and his
07:32 8 character, and I just want to say that how can a man be
07:32 9 a leader knowing that type of attitude. That's all
07:32 10 I've got to say.

07:32 11 MR. ANTONGIOVANNI: I'm sorry. There's been
07:32 12 a lot of personal things --

07:32 13 MR. POZZUTO: We would like to keep the
14 comments focused on the project.

07:32 15 MR. ANTONGIOVANNI: That's kind of my point.
07:32 16 But there's been a lot of personal things said in the
07:32 17 last couple of days, many specific things, mostly
07:32 18 coming from the other side from a few specific people.
07:33 19 I didn't know that that's what this was all about. It
07:33 20 sort of bothers me.

07:33 21 I understand what Tom was trying to say, and
07:33 22 it wasn't meant as an insult to anybody; it was meant
07:33 23 to defend people. And I -- I'm not brown or black or
07:33 24 whatever color you want to talk about. I'm one of
25 those uneducated people that live right next to this

1 thing. I haven't agreed to anything.

07:33 2 And if looking -- I don't even know

07:33 3 Tom Frantz that well, personally, and to be honest,

07:33 4 Tom, when I first saw him and whatever, he looks like

07:33 5 a kooky guy or whatever, you know. This is a kooky

07:33 6 guy, but I didn't know him.

07:33 7 I bet you as a teacher at Wasco, he's taught

07:33 8 more Hispanic kids and elevated them in their community

07:33 9 than most people in this room ever have. So I think

07:34 10 you -- I think you misinterpreted what he said. And

07:34 11 I'm sorry about that. I'm sure he wished he would have

07:34 12 phrased it a different way. I don't know. It's just

07:34 13 something that needed to be said by someone beside him.

07:34 14 But that's all.

07:34 15 MR. POZZUTO: All right. I think we've

07:34 16 reached the end. Again, thank you all for coming.

17 Please, submit any additional comments. We welcome

07:34 18 them. Have a safe trip home. Thank you.

19

20 (Whereupon, at 7:34 p.m., the proceedings

21 were concluded.)

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1 STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
)
2 COUNTY OF KERN) ss.

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7 I, Robin Saldana, do hereby certify that I
8 transcribed the foregoing-entitled matter; and I
9 further certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and
10 correct transcription of such proceedings.

11 Dated this Tuesday, October 1, 2013, in
12 Bakersfield, California.

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Robin Saldana

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