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Comment Received From: Judith Bingham
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BESS Workshop on Safety

In regard to the BESS Workshop on Safety - Docket # 24-BESS-01

My name is Judy Bingham and I have standing. I am a citizen, taxpayer, and business owner in the city of Beaumont, California. My address is 115 Veile Avenue directly across from the Beaumont ESS at 248 Veile Avenue. In reading the Docket it appears that the California Energy Commission is still unclear about their role in deciding who should license Lithium-ion battery storage systems.

My first question is - Are you going to protect the poor people of California who are unfortunate enough to live near these proposed and yet untested energy storage facilities? Or will you allow PGE and Southern California Edison to continue on with no guidance? In my research I have been unable to find any regulations in spite of the fact that this 100 Mega Watt monstrosity has been constructed right across the street from my home.

Will the state of California go along with its history of "It is better to ask for forgiveness than permission" especially when history has proven that PGE has put shareholder profits over the lives of so many of California's citizens. My energy provider is Southern California Edison, so I was horrified in my research to find Beaumont's Lithium-Ion Battery storage facility appears only on the PGE website.

It is disturbing that with Beaumont's history of corruption that we can find no specific State license or oversight on these Battery Energy Storage Systems. Having also had personal experience with a lithium battery in my laptop spontaneously catching fire, it must also be noted that Beaumont is located in the high desert and summer temperatures regularly top 110 degrees. Beaumont is also at high risk for wildfires and earthquakes. I and my neighbors are concerned for our safety.

Another cause for my concern is that I am aware that all CEQA approvals are sent to a building in Sacramento and until an attorney challenges the Environmental Impact Report in court (usually in the wake of a life-ending disaster) it has no impact whatsoever. This does not inspire confidence in the state's ability to protect us from greedy "for profit" developers.

Dudek Environmental, Terra-Gen, and Beaumont ESS all appear to be the same company. Is this not a conflict? This project was never noticed to neighbors and never appeared on a City Council agenda. The applicant suggested a zoning change and the BESS was approved by the Planning Commission "ONLY" on October 26, 2021.

Dudek Environmental checked off "no impact" to every question on the checklist for the Beaumont ESS. Several places in the EIR state there will be significant adverse impacts

on humans but then they lie and say there are no humans living near the site. This in spite of the fact that directly east of the BESS site is the "historical railroad district" also known as "the barrio" and it houses many Beaumont families. I have photos if you want them.

I have read that power plants and energy storage facilities with a capacity between 75 and 100 MW are eligible for a waiver from the full CEQA application process through a Small Power Plant Exemption. Is this the case of the Beaumont ESS? Can you clarify the rule?

Public records request dated January 31, 2024, asked the city for any applications or licenses for the Battery Storage System. The City's answer was "this is not a city project". The property owner posted a sign denying any responsibility. No one seems to want to claim this project. I guess the overriding question to the CEC is - Who is going to be responsible for the health and safety of the people of California?

Thank you for exploring this further. From my own experience -- I am asking the CEC to do their job and not allow local government and developers to operate with no oversight by the state.

Judy Bingham

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