

<b>DOCKETED</b>	
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<b>Project Title:</b>	Compass Energy Storage Project
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*Comment Received From: Assemblymember Laurie Davies*  
*Submitted On: 2/5/2025*  
*Docket Number: 24-OPT-02*

**From the Office of Assemblywoman Laurie Davies - Safety  
Concerns of BESS Facilities**

*Additional submitted attachment is included below.*



January 30, 2025

Mr. Drew Bohan  
Director  
California Energy Commission  
715 P Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

CC: Alice Reynolds, Chair, California Public Utilities Commission

Dear Mr. Bohan:

I am writing to express my concern about the safety of battery storage facilities in California. A number of recent fires have indicated there is insufficient protocols in place, especially in the case where these facilities are located in populated areas.

Under AB 205, the California Energy Commission (CEC) has authority to approve renewable energy projects, including battery energy storage systems (BESS) and I am requesting answers to the following questions:

- 1) How many BESS applications are under CEC review?
- 2) What is the CEC doing to ensure that these proposed projects have the necessary safety procedures and mechanisms in place to avoid any fire hazards?
- 3) Has the CEC considered implementing setback guidelines to ensure that BESS projects are located at a safe distance from residential or heavily populated areas?
- 4) Is the CEC studying the long-term environmental and health impacts of fires at battery storage facilities, including potential exposure to toxic chemicals?

The Moss Landing fire is one of several recent damaging fires that have occurred. In 2024 alone, two fires occurred on freeways, causing the closure of main Southern California thoroughfares. A spate of fires at battery storage facilities in San Diego have required significant man power including dedicated responders as a fire burned for two weeks straight. Another battery storage facility fire resulted in the premature retirement of a firefighter after he suffered significant injuries while attempting to contain the blaze.

With many of the requisite components in the CEC application, I want to ensure that all BESS projects under CEC review include robust fire prevention measures and demonstrate that the spread of toxins will not require massive evacuations and area

closures. The proposed Compass BESS project in San Juan Capistrano is of utmost concern as it is located in my district and near thousands of residents.

Thank you for your consideration of my inquiry and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Davies". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with the first and last names being clearly legible.

Laurie Davies  
Assemblywoman, District 74