

DOCKETED

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Comment Received From: Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-05)

Submitted On: 10/3/2013

Docket Number: 12-CAI-04

Letter from Rep. Mike Thompson, Bottle Rock Geothermal Project (79-AFC-4C)

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

MIKE THOMPSON

1ST DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT
REVENUE MEASURES

PERMANENT SELECT
COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM,

HUMAN INTELLIGENCE, ANALYSIS AND
COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

October 2, 2013

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Karen Douglas, Commissioner
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street, MS-31
Sacramento, CA 95814

Robert Weisenmiller, Chairman
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street, MS-33
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Bottle Rock Geothermal Facility Proposed Amendment to Compliance Conditions of Certification Relating to Financial Assurance (79-AFC-4C).

Dear Commissioner Douglas and Chairman Weisenmiller:

I am writing to you regarding Bottle Rock Geothermal Plant (BRP) in Lake County who has a proposed amendment pending before the California Energy Commission.

I have had the honor of representing Lake County in the House of Representatives for 15 years. Lake County is one of the most beautiful yet economically distressed areas of our country. With abundant natural resources and an employment rate of more than 11 percent, a great deal of attention has been focused on attracting investments in this area. These investments and California's push for renewable energy development have been critical to the reopening of this once-shuttered geothermal facility. BRP is the poster child for what President Obama and Governor Brown hoped for when they called for private investment in renewable energy – clean, reliable power; sustainable economic development; and good, local jobs in a clean tech economy.

It is my understanding that you are considering a change to the compliance agreement that was approved as part of BRP's transfer of ownership in 2005. This requested change would remove the requirement on the owners of BRP to maintain a \$5 million decommissioning bond. This change is necessary because a decommissioning bond of this size is substantially larger than any other posted by a facility under your jurisdiction and would force the facility back into financial distress.

While I understand the staff recommendation on this proposed amendment supports BRP's request, I also understand that staff is still recommending that a \$4.13 million decommissioning bond be maintained by BRP's owners. This facility is incredibly important to my district, and is expected to support more than 100 jobs in the Lake County area. However, should a bond requirement of this size be required by the commission, hundreds of millions of dollars invested in the plant could be put at risk.

I urge you to please consider the commitment that investors have made to this plant and amend the bond requirement to a more reasonable level that reflects the actual net costs of decommissioning this plant, and support BRP's petition.

Should you have any questions regarding this request or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me or Ian Blue in my office at (202) 225-3311. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress

Cc: Michael R. Peevey, President, California Public Utilities Commission