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April 5, 2021

Mr. Joseph Douglas
Compliance Project Manager
Siting, Transmission and
Environmental Protection (STEP) Division
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street, MS-2000
Sacramento, CA 95814
E-Mail: joseph.douglas@energy.ca.gov

RE: Huntington Beach Energy Project (12-AFC-02C): Comments on Staff Analysis for Amendment Proposal to Modify Visual Screening

Dear Mr. Douglas:

AES Huntington Beach Energy, LLC (“AES”) supports the California Energy Commission (“CEC”) Staff’s recommendation of approval of the Petition for Modification of VIS-1 and Approval of a Mural-Based Architectural Treatment (“Petition”)¹ for the Huntington Beach Energy Project.

The mural-based architectural treatment is a true collaboration between members of the local Huntington Beach community, of which AES is a proud member, to create an artistic representation of the unique Huntington Beach experience. The design incorporates key features identified by the local community and stakeholders as elements the community would like to see in the architectural treatment for the HBEP, such as imagery depicting the natural environment, local flora and fauna, and regional features—all intended to highlight nature and the unique Huntington Beach experience.

AES conducted extensive public outreach efforts throughout 2020, including sending direct mail information to community members and stakeholders, reaching out to stakeholders via social media and email, conducting virtual town halls, and soliciting community feedback through online surveys. AES also worked with local elected officials, Visit Huntington Beach, hotel operators, and community leaders to design a beautiful, thoughtful architectural treatment that can become a point of pride for the local community. The superb design by renowned Southern California-artist Kim West is the culmination of these extensive community engagement and outreach efforts.

The mural-based design will positively affect the public by implementing a community-based solution, which incorporates features and elements identified as being important to members of the local community and stakeholders. On November 2, 2020 the City Council voted to support the improvements set forth in the Petition and passed Resolution No. 2020-81.

AES agrees with Staff’s conclusions that the mural-based design treatment will not result in a significant impact on the environment and is consistent with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards. AES does not object to Staff’s proposed changes to Condition of Certification VIS-1 as reflected in the Staff report, and thanks Staff for its thorough analysis of the Petition.

¹ TN#: 235533

AES has one minor clarification to the description of the HBEP in the Staff Analysis. The HBEP is an 844-megawatt (MW), natural gas-fired electric generating facility comprised of both combined-cycle and simple cycle gas turbines. The 644 MW combined cycle gas turbine generator began commercial operations on February 4, 2020 and received its final Certificate of Occupancy from the Delegate Chief Building Official on June 25, 2020. The 200 MW simple cycle units have not been built.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. O'Kane".

Stephen O'Kane
Vice-President
AES Huntington Beach Energy, LLC