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BAY AREA AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Kevin R. Muller
17948 Beardsley Street
Castro Valley, CA 94546

September 11, 2009

Mr. Weyman Lee, P.E.
Senior Air Quality Engineer
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
939 Ellis Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

Dear Mr. Lee,

I am writing this letter to express my **opposition** to the proposed Russell City Energy Center. I am a former resident of Hayward and now live more or less downwind of Hayward. I also work in Hayward, near where the proposed plant would be sited. I encourage you to oppose this plant on the grounds that the residents of Hayward stand to share a disproportionate burden of the environmental and health impact of this plant.

According to the California Energy Commission Final Staff Assessment for the Russell City Energy Center (June 2002), the power generated by this plant will be sent across the Bay to be used by businesses and residents on the Peninsula. Thus, the residents of Hayward will not be the beneficiaries of the power produced by this new plant. More importantly, these same residents and their children will be the ones who will, for many decades to come, suffer from environmental and health impact of this plant. Indeed, based on the BAAQMD own Project Fact Sheet, the Russell City Energy Center will emit a number of pollutants, including benzene and formaldehyde, which are known for their carcinogenic effects. These chemicals pose a greater health threat to the residents of Hayward than they might for a more well-to-do community (like those found on the Peninsula) precisely because 53% of Hayward's citizens are minorities (see the 2000 federal census). And, according to a 2006 US Department of Health and Human Services study, all minority populations lag behind white populations in their access to healthcare and the quality of healthcare they receive (see <http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/nhdr06/highlights/nhdr06high.htm>). Thus pollutant-generating Russell City Energy Center and historic reality of poor access to health care for minorities would make a deadly combination for the residents of Hayward.

At stake in the decision to build or not to build are values that lie at the core of our shared understanding of American democracy. Based on my own experience among minority communities in Hayward, many individuals already feel oppressed, especially in these hard economic times. To allow this plant to go forward would send a signal to these people that the latent discrimination they suspect exists is in fact a reality. They may well see the plant as tangible evidence of what used to be called "environmental racism." Such feelings can only lead

them to question whether or not true justice and democracy do indeed exist in the United States today.

If we want social relations in this country to be harmonious, we need to work toward fairness and equality for all. I am afraid that building the Russell City Energy Center will simply serve to further sew seeds of discontent. I encourage you to vote against the construction of this plant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin R. Muller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kevin R. Muller