

September 14, 2009

Mr. Weyland Lee
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
939 Ellis Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

BAY AREA AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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Dear Mr. Lee,

I attended the public hearing back on September 2, 2009, and this letter represents additional remarks to the many comments by citizens made at that meeting in opposition to the power plant. I did not speak personally at that meeting, but I listened attentively and believe more intently than ever that the Bay Area Air Quality Management District should *not* approve Calpine's application for a PSD permit which would essentially give the company a green light to place a potentially toxic plant on the Hayward shoreline.

The more one learns about the plans for this power plant, the more one realizes its dangers and the responsibilities an agency such as yours has to protect the public's interest, safety, and well-being. As one of the speakers on September 2, 2009 put it succinctly, the residents of Hayward and indeed, of the entire Bay Area, rely upon you to view without partiality the short and long-term effects of the proposed construction. A closer examination of the plant's likely emissions leads to the conclusion that the Russell City plant is a bad idea.

The first reason that the permit should be denied speaks directly to your mission. By your own accounts, even with the modifications offered by Calpine in recent months, the power plant will put hundreds of thousands of pounds of nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter into the atmosphere to say virtually nothing of the millions of pounds of carbon dioxide, a dangerous greenhouse gas. Because protecting the air for all citizens in the Bay Area is your business, you should not contribute to its detriment by granting Calpine a permit, ensuring the "lift-off" of a polluting power plant.

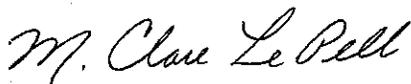
People aware of the indigenous flora and fauna of the Hayward shoreline know that the building of the power plant will undoubtedly negatively affect the eco systems there which we have recently come to appreciate and protect. If we view the birds and wildlife as the proverbial canaries in the coal mine, the damage that plants and animals sustain in the building and operation of the Russell City plant will surely foreshadow human suffering. In short, I encourage you to act now to prevent damage to every valuable Bay Area habitat by not issuing the PSD permit.

As several speakers said at the hearing earlier this month, the most immediate effects of the pollutants would be felt by the citizens of South Hayward, many of whom are poor and people of color. The growing student population of Chabot College would be particularly vulnerable to toxic air, potentially limiting students' abilities to pursue the educational and job training opportunities that could lead to an increase in their standards of living. Again, as guardians of the Bay Area's air quality, I urge you to look at the environmental and economic racism taking shape and to put an end to it.

As a career English teacher, the decision before you conjures the closing remarks made by Atticus Finch at the trial of Tom Robinson in the classic American novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Atticus believes wholeheartedly that "Our courts have their faults, as does any human institution, but in this country our courts are the great levelers, and in our courts, all men are created equal." By changing the word "courts" to "districts", I see clearly that your role here is to stop the injustice appearing in the guise of the Russell City power plant. Like Atticus, I implore you to reach a just verdict as you weigh the benefits against the considerable risks involved in the construction and operation of this particular Calpine project.

I appreciate your willingness to read to the end of this letter which articulates serious thinking about the decision before you. I trust you and your colleagues in Bay Area Air Quality Management District to make the right decision in favor of the people you serve.

Sincerely,



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