



## San Francisco Bay Chapter

Serving Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin and San Francisco Counties

April 9, 2010

Senator Gloria Romero  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 2090  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Romero;

The Sierra Club wishes to respond to your March 18, 2010 letter to the Chancellor and Trustees of Chabot-Las Positas Community College District. We wish to reiterate Sierra Club's long-running opposition to the proposed Russell City Energy Center (RCEC) – a polluting, fossil-fuel natural gas plant -- in the City of Hayward of Alameda County, and we stand by the work of the College on this problem.

In our view, Chabot and the College District has in fact acted responsibly in requesting that the serious public health impacts of this controversial project be addressed. Located within two miles from the proposed power plant, the College is recognized as an Hispanic Serving Institution and serves an enrolled population that is considered at-risk. In December 2009, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Community Air Risk Evaluation (CARE) Program identified Western Alameda County, where the Chabot campus is located and next to where RCEC would be located, as one of the communities "likely to face the highest health risks from toxic air contaminants."

The district's US Rep. Peter Stark, in stating his opposition to the plant, reminded the Bay Area Air Quality Management District that the Bay Area's air quality is classified by EPA as a "non-attainment zone" for asthma- and cancer-inducing ozone and particulate matter PM-10, and PM-2.5. Alameda County has the highest ground level ozone concentration of the nine Bay Area Counties. If approved, this plant would be the fifth largest point source of air emissions in the entire Bay Area

The College has hardly been alone in raising concerns - the Golden Gate Law School Clinic, for instance, has been very involved, as have local public entities and governments. In short, the College has provided leadership expected of a community institution and has earned the appreciation of Sierra Club and numerous other community organizations in Hayward and Alameda County. We would argue that the College would be considered negligent if it had *not* helped raise these concerns.

Sierra Club stands with the numerous environmental organizations - including but not limited to Audubon of California, the California Native Plant Society, the East Bay Regional Park District and the Hayward Regional Recreation District – in raising serious concerns about impacts to internationally significant wildlife and natural habitat.

On the issue of greenhouse gas emissions, Sierra Club and allies were successful in convincing the project developer, Calpine, to use the best available pollution control technology, as required by law. We felt that Calpine's decision to address that issue deserved public praise and serves as proof that developers of natural gas power plants across the country can reduce their ghg emissions profile. We however remain convinced that this project, on balance, fails to



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safeguard public health, is unnecessary to serve the Bay Area's energy needs, that the proposed site is inappropriate and mitigation measures for wildlife and natural habitat remain inadequate.

Since this project was first proposed nine years ago our State and Local governments have developed an impressive raft of policies, goals, rules and legislation to address global warming, to increase environmental protection, to reduce state dependency on the fossil fuel natural gas and to address environmental injustice. These proposed new fossil fuel plants very likely aren't needed to meet new demand. According to a study by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory for the California Energy Commission, by implementing the Governor's Executive Order to achieve 33% renewable energy supply, California can avoid most new fossil-fuel power plant construction while shutting down the state's fleet of aging plants. However, state agencies have allowed a major construction binge for natural gas power plants for the past eight years, creating a situation where we may have more power capacity than is needed and see renewable energy investments rendered economically unfeasible. The jobs of the future rely on clean tech, not unhealthy communities.

Attached is Sierra Club California's resolution January 24, 2009 on this problem.

We hope for your continued confidence in and support of the Chabot-Los Positas Community College District and that you consider the perspectives of the developer and proponents to be only part of the larger story.

Respectfully,

Aaron Israel  
Chair, energy committee  
San Francisco Bay Chapter  
Sierra Club

Cc:

Congressman Pete Stark  
State Senator Ellen Corbett  
State Senator Loni Hancock  
State Senate Committee on Education Members  
    Senator Robert Huff  
    Senator Elaine Alquist  
    Senator Carol Liu  
    Senator Abel Maldonado  
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Enclosures (2)

Letter from Chabot-Las Positas Community College to Sen. Romero dated 3.30.2010

Sierra Club California resolution on Large NG plants 2.24.09