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August 18, 2005

Honorable Beverly O'Neill
Mayor City of Long Beach
333 W. Ocean Boulevard, 14th Floor
Long Beach, California, 90802

Dear Mayor O'Neill

RE: AGENDA ITEM: Liquefied Natural Gas Facility, Regular Agenda of the August 23, 2005 meeting of the Long Beach City Council.

It has come to my attention that the City Council will consider a resolution in opposition to the siting of a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Receiving Terminal in the Port of Long Beach at its August 23, 2005 meeting.

It is my belief that such a resolution in advance of the detailed Environmental Impact Report/Study and site-specific safety analysis is ill-advised and will diminish the credibility of the City of Long Beach. Furthermore, it gives credence to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) point of view that localities cannot be entrusted to make rational decisions concerning LNG facility siting and, therefore, strengthens the argument for FERC eminent domain.

In opposition to federal preemption of LNG siting authority, I voted for the amendment to the Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 that supported local siting control. I believe that localities should have the right to determine such issues, however, the exercise of that right demands the responsibility to act dispassionately and use factual data and sound risk analysis in decision-making.

The City Council has yet to produce any credible information to determine the facility's safety. That will come only with a thorough public review of the environmental and safety documents, the result of which is months away.

The Long Beach City Council has an important role to play as the final reviewer of the Environmental Impact Report. This premature action jeopardizes that role and I strongly urge the City Council not to prejudge the appropriateness of siting the LNG facility in the Port of Long Beach. I stress the importance of not taking hasty action without full consideration of the consequences. Rejection of the LNG facility means that Long Beach squanders a tremendous source of income. Should Long Beach spurn new sources of revenue such as this one, do not expect the federal government to provide comparable funding in the future for Long Beach projects.

LNG is a fuel that will contribute greatly to cleaner air for southern California. Compared to other fuels that are transported and stored in the dual port complex, an LNG terminal is relatively safe. If safety is the pivotal concern, close the existing facilities that store dirty, polluting fuels and make way for an LNG terminal in the outer area reaches of the POLB.

The opposition to the LNG facility demonstrated by the proposed City Council Agenda item is a manifestation of the worst form of NIMBY-ism. It is the worst form because it is based on unwarranted fears borne of the absence of analytical risk analysis. Moreover, communication of risk to our constituents that is not based on empirical data is a public disservice. The result is more risk for all of us, dirtier air, and a dramatic reduction in financial resources.

Today I departed on an overseas diplomatic mission otherwise I would attend the City Council meeting on August 23rd in order to make known my deep concerns about the proposed resolution. My district director Kathleen Hollingsworth will monitor this matter for me. You may contact me via Kathleen at (714) 960-6483.

Sincerely,



Dana Rohrabacher

Member of Congress