



City of Hermosa Beach

Civic Center, 1315 Valley Drive, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254-3885

April 16, 2020

The Honorable Laura Friedman, Chair
Assembly Natural Resources Committee
State Capitol #2137
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 2071 (Muratsuchi), An act to add Section 13193.5 to the Water Code, relating to water pollution.
NOTICE OF SUPPORT

Dear Chairwoman Friedman,

I am writing on behalf of the entire City Council of the City of Hermosa Beach to declare our support for Assembly Bill 2071, which would ensure that certain fossil fuel power plants that utilize once-through cooling (OTC) will finally come into compliance with the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) OTC policy. A policy designed to end the harmful impacts of OTC to marine life and ocean ecosystems. By prohibiting the SWRB from issuing additional compliance deadline extensions for certain OTC plants after January 1, 2021, AB 2071 would ensure the negative impacts of OTC plants to the coasts and to the people in surrounding neighborhoods will end, without impacting near-term grid reliability.

On May 4, 2010, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted a policy requiring power plants, like the Redondo Beach AES Generating Station, to phase out OTC systems. OTC systems pump in billions of gallons of seawater to cool steam for generating electricity. These OTC systems kill millions of fish and other marine organisms and discharge warm water back to the ocean contributing to algal blooms and further ecosystem degradation. These effects are often more pronounced in enclosed bays and estuaries such as Santa Monica Bay, where the Redondo Beach plant is permitted to pump 932 million gallons per day.

Additionally, many of these OTC plants are aged fossil fuel plants, which have significant health and safety impacts on the residents who live in surrounding communities. The Redondo Beach plant, for example, has over 21,000 people living within a mile of the plant, including much of Hermosa Beach and its residents. This plant is the leading contributor of fine particulate matter pollution in the area and second to transportation in emissions of nitrogen oxides. Furthermore, these inefficient fossil fuel plants continue to emit greenhouse gases contrary to California's climate commitment and its greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Finally, the state and the electricity sector has had over a decade to prepare for implementation of the OTC policy. The deadlines for compliance for several power plants have already been extended multiple times, in addition to a proposal by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for a four plant extension set to be approved this year. However, this bill will not affect the near-term grid reliability concerns expressed by the PUC in these proposed extensions. The bill only prohibits future compliance extensions; it does not alter extensions approved by the SWRCB before January 1, 2021. Additionally, this bill is limited in scope so it will not affect communities with OTC power plants that have negotiated their own agreements with the power plant operators for continued operations and eventual compliance.

For these reasons, we urge the Chair and the Committee to support AB 2071.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Campbell
Mayor