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November 17, 2003

Ms. Ellen Russell  
Office of Fossil Energy (FE-27)  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20585-0350

**RE: General Comments by the Imperial County Board of Supervisors on the "Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement" pertaining to the Baja California Power, Inc., (BCP) and Sempra Energy Resources (SER) Presidential Permits previously issued. (FE Docket Nos. PP-234 and PP – 235)**

Dear Ms. Russell:

The Imperial County Board of Supervisors, the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) and the Imperial County Planning Department have received a copy of the Federal Register (Vol. 68, No. 210 dated Thursday October 30, 2003) regarding the above NOI.

While we appreciate the fact that Department of Energy (DOE) is ultimately preparing an EIS on the transmission line portion of the project we are concerned that it took court action to compel the federal government to follow the same laws that it expects the private sector to follow. In light of the court order dated July 2003, we would hope that DOE will prepare a comprehensive and legally adequate document and seriously consider all environmental and other concerns.

Since early 2000 the County has been extremely concerned with the impacts associated with the then proposed Sempra and Intergen power plants and related facilities located in Mexico, including but not limited to the natural gas pipeline and the transmission lines. From one of the first meetings held in on June 15, 2000 through numerous subsequent meetings, the County has repeatedly requested that a full **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** and an **Environmental Impact Report (EIR)** be prepared for the PROJECT as a whole. "The PROJECT as a whole meaning the "pipeline, the power plants and the transmission lines".

The County had and continues to have significant concerns with the project's impact on the following; air quality; the health and safety of the residents; visual resources; natural resources; tourism; endangered species; growth-inducing impacts on the coastal plains that currently have a known lack of water resources; and potential homeland security issues.

While County staff will file a more detailed response to your proposed NOI, the Board of Supervisors specifically requests that a "comprehensive health risk assessment" and "homeland security risk assessment" be provided.

More importantly the Board of Supervisors request that any identified impacts be properly and adequately mitigated and, if not mitigable the projects be abandoned.

Finally, further request that your office work closely with our staff; that you take their comments into full consideration as if written by the Board; that you keep the County of Imperial fully informed of all meetings; and that staff be given adequate time to review the DRAFT EIS.

Sincerely



Joe Maruca  
Chairman  
Board of Supervisors

Cc: Senator Feinstein & Boxer  
Congressman Filner  
CEO, Roberta Burns  
County Counsel, Ralph Cordova  
Air Pollution Control Officer, Steve Birdsall  
Planning Director, Jurg Heuberger  
Public Works Director, Tim Jones  
IID General Manager, Jesse Silva  
BLM El Centro District Manager, Greg Thomsen  
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