

Grassroots Coalition
For Full Disclosure of Public Health & Safety Issues
11924 W. Washington Boulevard • Los Angeles, CA 90066 • 310 636-3518 • Fax 310 636-3501
www.jeanette@saveballona.org

September 12, 2001

Subject: REQUEST FOR JLAC HEARING ON PLAYA VISTA IN PLAYA DEL REY, CA

Dear Legislator:

Each day public support for a thorough investigation of the dangers of explosion and exposure to toxic gases at the Playa Vista site in Playa del Rey, California grows. Since the 1940's natural gas has been stored in the old Playa del Rey / Venice oil fields under and adjacent to this site.

Grassroots Coalition along with Spirit of the Sage Council, Sierra Club Airport Marina Group and others are intensifying our efforts to demand full disclosure of the public health and safety issues at Playa Vista.

We believe all construction should cease and that a completely independent Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) should be done.

We believe that the California Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLAC) should convene a hearing as quickly as possible to investigate fundamental inaccuracies and omissions in the reports Playa Vista has submitted to the City of Los Angeles.

The City has poorly supervised, mismanaged and approved the use of unproven, untested, experimental mitigation systems at the Playa Vista construction site. We have provided literature from the foremost geosynthetics research institute (Geosynthetic Research Institute in Philadelphia) that illustrates the dangers of these products not being able to withstand conditions, which exist at the Playa Vista site. Consultants have also warned the City these mitigation methods will not work over the lifetime of the project.

The City has not demonstrated the ability to build out this development without endangering the future Playa Vista residents as well as neighbors in the surrounding areas.

This development will house 30,000 people and 20,000 workers; it is the largest proposed development in the history of Los Angeles. We need accountability for the \$70 million in state subsidized housing bonds for two apartment buildings and \$135 million in Mello Roos Bonds currently allocated for Playa Vista.

Since 1993 Patricia McPherson of Grassroots Coalition has been building strong relationships with various health and safety agencies. Her whole focus is on the LACK OF DISCLOSURE OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES.

The agencies wish to perform due diligence but we believe they need protection from political interference that would thwart that objective. Our investigations reveal politicians who have gotten MAJOR contributions (hundreds of thousands of dollars) from Playa Vista investors.

To reinforce our work and the work of these fine agencies we need a JLAC probe to force accountability. For more detailed information go to our website: www.saveballona.org.

Background Information

The Department of Toxic Substance Control of the California EPA has objected in part to the CLA Report on Playa Vista because adequate H₂S and BTEX studies have never been done. Playa Capital, in their own historical data, which we retrieved, showed there were dangerously high levels of H₂S. We do have evidence, supported by letters to their companies, that workers were injured.

Grassroots Coalition retrieved one study of thirty-eight planned archaeological borings. Only four were completed due to above OSHA levels of H₂S and methane contamination. There is also supporting California Environmental Protection Agency data of H₂S across the site. All of this data was excluded from the Los Angeles Chief Legislative Analyst's Report (CLA Report) on Playa Vista.

We can provide this documentation. CPUC Judge Carol Brown ruled on September 24, 2001 that a Health Risk Assessment must be done in the area surrounding the SoCalGas underground gas storage facility. Since 1993 Patricia McPherson, of Grassroots Coalition, Kathy Knight of Spirit of the Sage Council and Bernard Endres, PhD who is a gas migration expert, started telling the City how dangerous this area is. Due in part to sample gas studies, which they provided, state and federal agencies are involved in an ongoing investigation of the site and surrounding area. The mitigation systems Playa Vista is installing (however inadequate) were developed because these three individuals applied constant pressure and ferreted out hidden information.

The dangers of both long and short-term exposure to even low levels (1 to 3 parts per million) of hydrogen sulfide (H₂S) are corroborated by independent research studies across the country. To more fully understand the potential for explosion and the dangers of exposure to toxic gases at Playa Vista visit our website: www.saveballona.org.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Vosburg
Grassroots Coalition