

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

UCLA

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO

SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ



ARTHUR M. WINER, Ph.D.
EMAIL: amwiner@ucla.edu

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES DEPT.
FIELDING SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90095-1772

June 26, 2018

Via Electronic Mail

Mr. Jodie Sackett
County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
Hall of Records, 13th Floor, Room 1348
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
jsackett@planning.lacounty.gov

Re: Centennial Project Final Environmental Impact Report

Dear Commissioners:

As an atmospheric chemist and air quality expert with 45 years of experience, who has extensively studied and described in more than 200 peer-reviewed journal articles the causes and impacts of poor air quality in Southern California communities, I am asking you to deny approval of the proposed Centennial project. Large-scale urban sprawl of this immense magnitude is not the way to meet the health-based ozone and fine particle air quality standards which continue to be routinely violated in this region, nor is it the way to reach the climate change mitigation goals of California.

ADD-G.47-1

The proposed Centennial project is a massive 5,800-acre development more than 60 miles away from downtown areas. It will worsen air pollution by putting more cars on roads for long trips, which will intensify already-terrible traffic conditions while increasing emissions of air pollutants such as nitrogen oxides (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide, heavy metals, carbon dioxide and respirable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). It will also lead to more ozone (O₃) production through the photochemical reactions of NO_x and VOCs emitted by these vehicles. Short- and long-term exposure to several of these pollutants have been shown to have adverse health effects in humans and have been linked with premature mortality, compromised birth outcomes and a host of respiratory impacts. In addition, increased daily vehicle trips will result in more emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs), including NO_x, carbon dioxide (CO₂), and methane (CH₄), which will, as noted above, counter California's climate change goals.

ADD-G.47-2

The proposed project would be located at the boundary between the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB) and the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB). However, most vehicle trips

ADD-G.47-3

associated with the project would occur within the SoCAB, as potential residents would likely commute between Centennial and either Santa Clarita (>30 miles away) or Los Angeles (>60 miles away). This is a major concern because the SoCAB already suffers from high levels of air pollution. Despite decades-long efforts to reduce air pollutant emissions, the SoCAB still fails to meet federal (or state) air quality standards, specifically the national ambient air quality standards for 8-hour O₃, 1-hour O₃, annual-averaged PM_{2.5}, or 24-hour PM_{2.5}.

ADD-G.47-3
(cont'd)

A combination of unique topography (the SoCAB is surrounded by high mountains and the coast), adverse meteorology that results in low mixing layers and limited dispersal, and the emissions from millions of vehicles on the road due to daily commuters and the goods movement industry make the SoCAB the worst area of O₃ pollution in the nation. According to the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), in 2012 mobile sources contributed almost 90% of the region's total NO_x emissions. Obviously, we cannot control the topography or meteorology of this area, but we can (and must) change our behavior to reduce vehicle emissions if we are serious about improving air quality in Los Angeles County.

ADD-G.47-4

Approving developments like Centennial will only exacerbate a wide range of health effects due to air pollution in this region. If LA County is truly committed to keeping its residents healthy, and to combatting climate change, then we need to redefine how we design and plan our cities and move away from the massive urban sprawl and resulting adverse air quality impacts inherent in this Centennial project.

ADD-G.47-5

Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially,



Arthur Winer, PhD
Distinguished Emeritus Professor, UCLA Fielding School of Public Health
Director Emeritus, UCLA Environmental Science and Engineering Program
Associate Director Emeritus, UCLA Institute of Environment and Sustainability