



OAKLAND SAYS “NO!” TO COAL SHIPMENTS AT THE OAKLAND ARMY BASE

The recent news headline “Unlikely Partners: Utah Investing \$53 Million to Export Coal Through Oakland Port,” came as a shock to Oakland’s political leaders, who have consistently opposed the export of hazardous fossil fuels due to safety and environmental concerns.

Lynette Gibson McElhaney, President of the Oakland City Council, is unequivocal in her opposition to coal being exported from City-owned lands, "West Oakland cannot be subjected to another dirty industry in its backyard. We were told that this new terminal on City property would increase economic growth, but I see Coal exports as the Trojan Horse in the development of the Oakland Army Base - it is not the type of economic development that we want - no thank you!."

Air quality and public health have long been critical issues for West Oakland residents - West Oakland children are admitted to the hospital with asthma complications at a higher rate than almost anywhere else in California. The West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project - a community-based environmental justice organization - has been fighting for years to reduce the toxic diesel particulate emissions that come from the heavy trucking and shipping activity nearby.

Says McElhaney, “Since coal was not contemplated to be exported when the Army Base Development project was approved, the community has not yet had the chance to make their voices heard on this subject. This is unacceptable” The Oakland City Council, and the Port Board of Commissioners have already taken stances against coal exports, specifically:

- In February of 2014, the Board of Port Commissioners rejected a proposal to ship coal from one of their terminals.
- In June of 2014, Councilmember McElhaney and her colleagues passed a resolution opposing the transport of coal, oil, petcoke (a byproduct of the oil refining process) and other hazardous materials by railways and waterways within the City.

The decision to ship coal from the Oakland waterfront has implications beyond the health of local residents who may be affected by coal dust or potentially hazardous spills.

According to Jess Dervin-Ackerman of the Sierra Club San Francisco Bay Chapter, "Coal producers are eager to keep burning this dirty energy source even as the United States moves quickly toward a clean energy future. West coast ports are rejecting proposals like this because coal, no matter where it is burned, is a dirty fuel that has global impacts in terms of climate change. California has worked hard to be a coal free state, and it should stay that way."

Yours, with deep Oakland love,

Lynette Gibson McElhaney
President of the Oakland City Council