

# Environmental Health Coalition

COALICION de SALUD AMBIENTAL

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

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## Over 100 Rally for Environmental Justice

*Community Protests Suggested Power Plant Location*

**(January 18, 2008) – Chula Vista, CA.** Over 100 residents and students fought against the proposed 100MW power plant known as the Chula Vista Energy Upgrade Project, or the “MMC peaker plant” at a rally held yesterday by Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) and the Southwest Chula Vista Civic Association. MMC, the New York-based publicly traded company, is applying for certification of the plant, which, if approved, would replace a plant currently in the same location.

Before a meeting of the California Energy Commission (CEC), protestors at the Otay Recreation Center - mainly residents and high school students from southwest Chula Vista - carried signs opposing the location of the new plant. Some of the concerns include the close proximity to homes and schools (350 feet and 1300 feet, respectively), an on-site 12,000 gallon ammonia tank, possible violation of zoning ordinances and general plan policies, and the lack of a renewable energy component.

“This is a poorly planned power plant that is just too close to homes and schools. The current plant was a mistake, and the new one will be a bigger mistake,” said Leo Miras, EHC Policy Advocate. Chula Vista resident Hugo Ivan Salazar agreed, saying, “This process needs greater transparency and greater public accountability to ensure the community does not get stuck with a heavily-polluting power plant.”

Chula Vista City Councilmember and southwest Chula Vista resident Rudy Ramirez also voiced opposition to the project. “We need to make our voices heard. We are tired of having these polluting plants in our neighborhoods and next to our schools and we need to make that very clear to MMC and the CEC.”

Following the rally, the residents’ passion and commitment continued at the meeting, where they confronted MMC and the CEC about a process that they felt has not adequately represented their concerns. “People in our community are very sick. No one asked us if we wanted that thing here,” said one resident. Representatives from the affected communities expressed similar frustrations throughout the evening.

The CEC will hold more meetings that are open to the public, and the ultimate decision on the project is scheduled for fall 2008.

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