



James Johnson
City of Long Beach
Councilmember, Seventh District

R-12

Date: March 22, 2011

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Vice-Mayor Suja Lowenthal, Second District &
Councilmember James Johnson, Seventh District J.J.
Councilmember Rae Gabelich, Eighth District R.G.

Subject: Request For Zero Emissions Option in the ICTF Environmental Impact Report

RECOMMENDATION

Request that the City Attorney draft a resolution calling for the Intermodal Container Transfer Facility Joint Powers Authority to include a Zero-Emissions Goods Movement System option in its anticipated Environmental Impact Report analyzing the potential expansion of the facility.

DISCUSSION

Green growth. That has long been the dream for the future of goods movement. We know what green growth is: the ability to move goods swiftly through our region, and thus preserve and expand the jobs that come with the industry, without sacrificing the health and well-being of our residents. With expansion plans of near-dock rail being considered, it is now time to make this dream a reality.

For many years, the reality has been that the growth of goods movement has brought regional benefits, while the local communities proximate to the industry have borne the brunt of the costs. The increased rates of cancer, heart disease, and other illnesses close to goods movement facilities are well documented, as are the economic benefits to the region and nation that such goods movement provides. Much of the negative environmental effect, particularly in the greater Long Beach/San Pedro/Wilmington area, stems from a simple fact: our containers are moved back and forth from the ports to the near-dock facility by diesel trucks. Thousands of trucks congest local roadways and emit particulate matter day after day to make this four-mile trip each way to and from the rail

facilities. While considering expansion of these facilities, we must pause and ask a fundamental question: is there a better way to move these goods?

There is. The technology currently exists to move containers to near-dock facilities without polluting our communities. Such zero-emissions goods movement technology represents a true paradigm shift, as we would be able to move goods quickly and efficiently to market without sacrificing the health of our neighborhoods. Additionally, we would increase the efficiency at our ports, a necessary plan of action for our ports to secure a competitive edge in the years to come. By reducing pollution and increasing efficiency, a zero emissions goods movement system will allow for future port growth, which is so vital for the industry.

The upcoming Environmental Impact Report for the expansion of the Intermodal Container Transfer Facility (ICTF) will analyze the project's environmental effects on communities for decades to come. A vital part of this report should be an analysis of the project combined with a zero-emissions goods movement system. What would the impact of the project be if goods arrived at ICTF without emitting any pollution on the neighborhoods? What would this new paradigm—one in which we finally show how we can truly have green growth—look like? The expansion of the ICTF facility, if approved, would occur over the course of several years and would not reach capacity until some years after that. Zero emissions goods movement systems could thus be implemented over a period of time. Analyzing an option with a zero-emissions goods movement system along with other such mitigations is needed to make this a complete document for policy makers to consider.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no significant fiscal impact for this resolution.