

April 14, 2016

Via Electronic Mail

RE: Proposal for a public health impact review of coal transport, handling, and storage related to the bulk commodities terminal to be built at the former Oakland Army Base

Dear Assistant City Administrator Cappio, Mayor Schaaf and City Councilmembers,

Human Impact Partners is pleased to submit this brief proposal to the City of Oakland to conduct a public health impact review for the export of coal through Oakland, addressing **whether or not there is substantial evidence that the transportation, loading, unloading, and storage of coal will pose substantial dangers to public health and safety in Oakland.**

The City of Oakland is facing an important decision that we understand will rest in large part on the Council's determination as to the answer to this question. **Oakland is blessed with a rare aggregation of nationally-known public health and environmental health professionals who, combined, have hundreds of years of relevant expertise and experience.** We propose to marshal this expertise to assess the evidence submitted into the public record as well as other relevant knowledge to reach public health findings on the risks to Oakland residents and workers.

### *Proposal*

Human Impact Partners (HIP) will assemble a **panel of Bay Area public health experts** with a variety of backgrounds, including environmental health (including air quality, water quality, and noise), environmental justice, occupational health and medicine, and epidemiology. It is likely to include current and former staff at local and state health agencies, academics, medical professionals, and non-profit leaders. It will also include experts working at the intersection of energy policy and public health. Through in-person meetings and phone calls, this panel will guide the review process, providing feedback at each step of the project as described below.

HIP will then carry out the following steps.

**1) Establish a detailed process for conducting the public health impact review.** HIP will propose a detailed process, including, for example, how to assess the quality of available studies and the general level of confidence in the findings. This process will be modeled on rapid health analyses developed by Human Impact Partners, for example in a grant-funded pilot program with the Health Officers Association of California to assess the health impacts of proposed California state legislation. The expert panel will provide feedback about the proposed process.

**2) Review all comments submitted as part of the public record about the transport of coal through Oakland.** Our goal will be to understand and evaluate all evidence presented to date about potential health risks of coal transport, loading/unloading, and storage to Oakland residents and workers. We will also review available data about the health of Oakland residents, especially those living near the facilities that will be used to transport and store the coal and populations with underlying vulnerabilities that could be exacerbated by the proposed facility and related activities. Additionally, we will review information submitted about potential strategies to mitigate risks, and related published and other evidence about mitigation strategies. HIP will conduct this review, summarize the findings, and then review with the expert panel.

**3) Identify and fill gaps in the public record.** HIP will review peer reviewed and government-published literature and other resources (e.g., “The Human Health Effects of Rail Transport of Coal Through Multnomah County, Oregon”) to identify any gaps in the evidence submitted to the public record. We will ask the expert panel to identify both potential gaps and additional resources to review. HIP will then review and summarize these identified resources.

**4) Reach and summarize findings in a report.** HIP will convene the expert panel, review preliminary findings with them, and lead a process with the panelists to answer the question: Is there substantial evidence that the transportation, loading, and unloading of coal will pose substantial hazards to public health and safety in Oakland? The process will provide an opportunity for the experts to discuss specific aspects of the proposal and specific potentially related risks and hazards, as well as the summary determination as to the extent of those risks and hazards. HIP will then draft a report about the findings, on which the panel will provide feedback. The technical report will include a non-technical executive summary. After the report is submitted, HIP and panelists will be available to present findings to elected officials, city staff, and the public.

### *Team Qualifications*

Founded in 2006, HIP is an independent non-profit corporation (501(c)3) based in Oakland. HIP’s mission is to transform the policies and places people need to live healthy lives by increasing the consideration of health and equity in decision making. We have conducted action-oriented public health research projects on the local, state and federal levels – with experience in communities across the country, from California to Maine. Findings from our research and recommendations have been integrated into policymaking, planning, and project design and implementation.

HIP is a recognized national leader in the field of Health Impact Assessment, having co-founded and led the Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessment and co-authored widely cited guidance for the field, including: Minimum Elements and Practice Standards for Health Impact Assessment; Guidance and Best Practices for Stakeholder Participation in Health Impact Assessments; and Promoting Equity through the Practice of Health Impact Assessment. To date, HIP has conducted over 40 public health research projects in many domains, including land use, transportation, and housing. We have also provided training and technical assistance to organizations throughout the country as they conduct public health research projects, successfully assisting these partners as they work to improve health and reduce health inequities locally.

PSE Healthy Energy will be a subcontractor for HIP. PSE Healthy Energy, a non-profit energy science and policy institute and also based in Oakland, is dedicated to supplying evidence-based, scientific and technical information and resources on the public health, environmental and climate dimensions of energy production and use. The mission of PSE Healthy Energy is to bring scientific transparency and clarity to energy policy discussions, helping to level the playing field for citizens, NGOs, the media, and policymakers by generating, translating, and disseminating scientific information. No other interdisciplinary collaboration of physicians, scientists, and engineers exists to focus specifically on health and sustainability at the intersection of energy science and policy.

### *Budget*

While a full budget will need to be negotiated with the City, we estimate the budget to be approximately \$80,000.

If the City is willing to consider a proposal from HIP, we can prepare a proposed scope of work. We understand that the earliest possible date upon which the City Council could provide the City

Administrator with authority to enter into a contract for services with HIP would be May 3, 2016. We would be happy to meet with the City Administration to discuss details of how to move this process forward as swiftly as possible.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Heller', written in a cursive style.

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