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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Superior Court Decision Assists Boyle Heights Community and Councilmember José Huizar in Fight Against Vernon Power Plant

Decision means Vernon power plant that Huizar and community fought will not be built anytime soon

LOS ANGELES (August 5, 2008) – Councilmember José Huizar today expressed his gratitude regarding Superior Court judge Ann I. Jones ruling last week that effectively delays the construction of the Vernon Power Plant that the Boyle Heights community and Councilmember Jose Huizar fought against.

“For far too long, low-income and minority communities have been victims of ‘environmental discrimination,’” Huizar said. “We’ve been made to breath in air that is filthier and more polluted than in other more affluent areas. The ruling recognizes this severe and unfair health hazard. I applaud Judge Jones and this community thanks her as well.”

Jones ruled last Tuesday that the South Coast Air Quality Management District could not change its policy and offer “priority reserve” pollution credits to power plant developers at half their market value when air-quality conditions in California currently exceed federal limits.

Jones ruled that the AQMD could not offer the pollution credits to power plants until the AQMD complied with the California Environmental Quality Act and reported on the environmental effects of such a move. Her ruling is a strong victory for Huizar and other opponents of the proposed Vernon Power Plant and delays planned construction of the power plant by one to two years, experts say.

In late 2007, Huizar marched with concerned Boyle Heights residents and others in a mock funeral in the City of Vernon. The councilman shares residents concerns that the millions of pounds of nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides and other particulate matter that would be generated by the plant each year would severely affect the local air quality and the health of residents.

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Following the protest, Huizar garnered the support of the City Council to oppose the proposed power plant and in February 2008 successfully petitioned to include the City of Los Angeles as an intervening agency in the plant's certification process.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District has estimated that emissions from the power plant will result in an increase in annual adult mortality of 4 to 12 persons in the area, as part of the preparation of a health risk assessment.

For more information about Councilmember Huizar and the 14th District, please visit www.lacity.org/cd14.

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