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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Councilmember José Huizar's Efforts Against Boyle Heights Hazardous Waste Plant Pay Off

*City Attorney agrees with Huizar and joins lawsuit by Community Redevelopment Agency
against often-penalized hazardous materials company seeking to expand operations*

LOS ANGELES (August 19, 2008) – Councilmember José Huizar's efforts to halt plans to increase operations and expand the size of a hazardous waste facility in Boyle Heights paid off today as the City Attorney agreed with Huizar's recommendation to join in a lawsuit against the company and the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control.

The City joins the CRA/LA's legal action which contends that the Industrial Service Oil Company, Inc., a Boyle Heights oil and antifreeze recycling plant located at 1700 S. Soto St., is seeking to expand its operations, and has inadequately addressed environmental concerns for the project.

“With this lawsuit we're telling ISOCI that you can't ignore your obligations to the health and safety of the residents of Boyle Heights,” said Councilmember José Huizar. “Far too often, people who live in low-income communities are exposed to environmental hazards that those in more affluent communities are not. Today, the City Attorney and I are saying, it doesn't matter if you live in Boyle Heights or Brentwood, we're going to protect you from undue exposure to cancer-causing toxins.”

The state's DTSC, which has issued a permit to ISOCI, is also named in the lawsuit. The City of Los Angeles contends that for nearly two decades ISOCI has operated under an interim DTSC permit and that the newly issued final DTSC permit is based in part on an inadequate environmental document that contains inaccuracies and does not properly address significant environmental concerns related to the proposed expansion.

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City Attorney agrees with Councilmember Huizar: sues hazardous waste company

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Huizar said that the state agency has superseded the city's rights by issuing a permit to ISOCI.

“With all due respect, the DTSC has overstepped its authority,” Huizar said. “And we’re hoping the court agrees with us that it is very important not to take away crucial environmental safety requirements where they matter most, the local level.”

ISOCI is looking to intensify operations and house a wider range of hazardous and toxic material, including wastewater, sludge and a myriad of other chemical contaminants known to be hazardous, cancer-causing agents. The proposed plan would nearly double the size of the physical plant.

The company's plans to expand have been met with strong opposition from Boyle Heights residents.

Last year, Councilmember Huizar marched with 500 concerned local residents who came out to protest ISOCI's plan to expand and increase operations.

The lawsuit comes on the heels of another victory for residents earlier this month, when a Superior Court judge ruled the South Coast Air Quality Management District could not offer pollution credits to power plants until they complied with the California Environmental Act and reported on the environmental effects of such a move.

That ruling should delay the construction of the proposed controversial Southeast Energy Center, formerly known as the Vernon power plant, experts said. In November 2007, Councilmember Huizar also marched in protest with hundreds of local residents and others in a mock funeral procession in Vernon, saying data showed increased production would result in pollution-related deaths in the area.

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

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