April 29, 2016

Dear Mayor Schaaf and Members of the Oakland City Council:

I am writing to express my opposition to the shipment of coal from the marine terminal under development at the former Oakland Army Base. I am concerned about the significant negative health and safety impacts posed to Oakland residents by this project. Coal was not considered in the environmental review of the project when it was originally approved.

I care deeply about preserving air quality and public health, as well as mitigating the impacts of climate change. Despite claims by project proponents, there are no proven topping agents that have demonstrated effectiveness at reducing coal dust transported over long trips. In addition, many of the world's leading health organizations, including the American Lung Association and World Health Organization, have concluded that:

- Coal dust is a source of particular matter that is dangerous to breathe.
- Coal dust, along with silica and asbestos, is responsible for most occupational lung diseases due to airborne particulate.
- Particulate matter is linked to significant health problems, including premature death in people with lung or heart disease, nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, aggravated asthma, decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms such as irritation of the airways, coughing, or difficulty in breathing.

Due to their proximity to the port and other major transportation lines, Oakland residents are already impacted by pollutants and other environmental hazards. The coal dust and increased emissions caused by coal train traffic will only exacerbate the health issues experienced by residents. Safety is an additional concern; the proposed project will increase the risk of train collision and derailments.

In addition, as coal is considered the leading source of greenhouse gas emissions among fossil fuels, there is no justification for facilitating its increased use worldwide. Research by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District has shown that toxins that result from coal burning in Asia travel across the Pacific Ocean to the West Coast. I urge you to oppose this proposal. Thank you for your consideration of the many negative environmental and health impacts posed by this coal transport project.

Sincerely,

Nate Miley, Supervisor
Alameda County District 4