

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ALBANY CITY COUNCIL OPPOSING
FACILITIES THAT ENGAGE IN HANDLING AND STORAGE OF COAL
AND PETCOKE IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION AND
URGING STRINGENT REGULATION OF SUCH FACILITIES
BY THE BAY AREA AIR DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, Albany, along with the communities of the Bay Area, have been historically united in opposition to the transport of coal through the East Bay and the storage and handling of coal in West Oakland and, in 2016, expressed their opposition in a letter from the mayors of Albany, Berkeley, El Cerrito, Emeryville, Dublin, Fremont, Hayward,

1 Livermore, Richmond, San Leandro, and Union City and in resolutions passed by the city
2 councils of Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, El Cerrito, Oakland, and Richmond;¹ and
3

4 **WHEREAS**, OBOT would operate for decades under a 66-year lease with the City of
5 Oakland, so decisions made now will have local, regional, and global impacts for generations
6 to come; and
7

8 **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Department of Energy states that the initial capacity of the
9 proposed terminal will be 9 to 10 million tons of coal per year,² which translates to rail traffic
10 of multiple mile-long “unit” trains passing daily in each direction through many East Bay
11 communities, including Albany as well as Martinez, Crockett, Rodeo, Pinole, San Pablo, North
12 Richmond, Richmond, El Cerrito, Berkeley, Emeryville, and Oakland; and
13
14
15

16 ¹ See Zoe Chafe Ph.D., Analysis of Health Impacts and Safety Risks and Other Issues/Concerns
17 Related to the Transport, Handling, Transloading, and Storage of Coal and/or Petroleum Coke
18 (Petcoke) in Oakland and at the Proposed Oakland Bulk and Oversized Terminal, June 22, 2016, p.
19 100 et seq. [collecting letter and resolutions] ([https://nocoalinoakland.info/wp-](https://nocoalinoakland.info/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Zoe-Chafe-Analysis-of-health-Impacts-and-Safety-Risks-etc-oak059408-6-22-2016.pdf)
20 [content/uploads/2026/05/Zoe-Chafe-Analysis-of-health-Impacts-and-Safety-Risks-etc-oak059408-6-](https://nocoalinoakland.info/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Zoe-Chafe-Analysis-of-health-Impacts-and-Safety-Risks-etc-oak059408-6-22-2016.pdf)
21 [22-2016.pdf](https://nocoalinoakland.info/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Zoe-Chafe-Analysis-of-health-Impacts-and-Safety-Risks-etc-oak059408-6-22-2016.pdf)); Oakland City Council Ordinance No. 13385 and Resolution No. 86234 (June 27, 2016);
22 Albany City Council Resolution 2015-10 (March 2, 2015).
23

24 ² U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Department to Use Defense Production Act Funding to Expand
25 Coal Capacity at 13 Plants and Build Export Infrastructure (June 4, 2026)
26 ([https://www.energy.gov/articles/energy-department-use-defense-production-act-funding-expand-](https://www.energy.gov/articles/energy-department-use-defense-production-act-funding-expand-coal-capacity-13-plants-and)
27 [coal-capacity-13-plants-and](https://www.energy.gov/articles/energy-department-use-defense-production-act-funding-expand-coal-capacity-13-plants-and)); U.S. Department of Energy, Defense Production Act Title III Project
28 Selections: Coal Fleet Projects and West Gateway Terminal (undated)
29 ([https://www.energy.gov/hgeo/defense-production-act-title-iii-project-selections-coal-fleet-projects-](https://www.energy.gov/hgeo/defense-production-act-title-iii-project-selections-coal-fleet-projects-and-west-gateway)
[and-west-gateway](https://www.energy.gov/hgeo/defense-production-act-title-iii-project-selections-coal-fleet-projects-and-west-gateway)).

1 **WHEREAS**, coal trains traveling through Albany to and from the proposed terminal
2 would increase the risk of toxic coal dust escaping into neighborhoods where thousands of
3 people live, work, shop, and recreate each day, passing less than 100 feet from youth sports
4 facilities at Fielding Field, the University Village Community Garden, Verana Hill affordable
5 housing development, and several residences along Cleveland Ave; less than one-third of a
6 mile from University Village family housing, Ocean View Park, the City of Albany after-
7 school program, and Ocean View Elementary School; and less than one-half mile from
8 Belmont Village Senior Living retirement home, and would pose the same danger to other
9 communities along the coal trains' route; and
10

11 **WHEREAS**, emissions of coal dust can occur when products are transported, handled
12 and stored at bulk transfer facilities, and even from empty rail cars.³ Coal handling and
13 transport has been shown to significantly increase ambient fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and
14 coarse particulate matter (PM10). UC Davis researchers monitoring trains in Richmond found
15 that passing coal trains added an average of 8.3 micrograms per cubic meter of PM2.5 to local
16 air,⁴ the equivalent of a 33 point increase in the Air Quality Index (AQI); and
17

18 **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency concluded that “[s]ignificant
19 quantities of fugitive dust from pet coke storage and handling operations present a health risk.”
20

21 ³ See Zoe Chafe Ph.D., Analysis of Health Impacts and Safety Risks and Other Issues/Concerns
22 Related to the Transport, Handling, Transloading, and Storage of Coal and/or Petroleum Coke
23 (Petcoke) in Oakland and at the Proposed Oakland Bulk and Oversized Terminal, June 22, 2016, p.
24 100 et seq. [collecting letter and resolutions] ([https://nocoalinoakland.info/wp-](https://nocoalinoakland.info/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Zoe-Chafe-Analysis-of-health-Impacts-and-Safety-Risks-etc-oak059408-6-22-2016.pdf)
25 [content/uploads/2026/05/Zoe-Chafe-Analysis-of-health-Impacts-and-Safety-Risks-etc-oak059408-6-](https://nocoalinoakland.info/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Zoe-Chafe-Analysis-of-health-Impacts-and-Safety-Risks-etc-oak059408-6-22-2016.pdf)
26 [22-2016.pdf](https://nocoalinoakland.info/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Zoe-Chafe-Analysis-of-health-Impacts-and-Safety-Risks-etc-oak059408-6-22-2016.pdf)); Oakland City Council Ordinance No. 13385 and Resolution No. 86234 (June 27, 2016);
27 Albany City Council Resolution 2015-10 (March 2, 2015).

28 ⁴ Ostro, et al., The impact of coal trains on PM2.5 in the San Francisco Bay Area, AIR QUALITY,
29 ATMOSPHERE & HEALTH, March 20, 2023, available
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11869-023-01333-0>;

1 The agency expressed particular concern about particles that are 10 micrometers in diameter
2 or smaller (PM10) because those particles generally pass through the throat and nose into the
3 lungs and into the bloodstream;⁵ and

4
5 **WHEREAS,** the health effects of PM 2.5 are well-documented. A recent CARB-
6 funded study measured air pollution from passing coal trains and facility operations at an
7 existing East Bay coal terminal, finding significantly increased levels of PM2.5, which can
8 cause or worsen lung and heart conditions and result in premature death, with children, seniors,
9 and people of color being at greatest risk.⁶ Their health-impact assessment estimated that the
10 incremental PM2.5 from uncovered coal trains produced 1–6% increases over baseline in
11 mortality, cardiovascular and respiratory hospitalizations, and asthma exacerbations.⁷ PM2.5
12 has also been shown to increase rates of depression ⁸, dementia, stroke, diabetes, pregnancy
13 complications and abnormal fetal brain development, and to increase emergency department
14 visits and lost days of work and school .⁹ Dust from coal and petroleum coke (petcoke) carries

15
16 ⁵ <https://archive.epa.gov/epa/petroleum-coke-chicago/health-effects-petroleum-coke.html>

17 ⁶ See, e.g. Ostro, et al., 2023 at p. 7, see also, Public Health Advisory Panel on Coal in Oakland, An
18 Assessment of the Health and Safety Implications of Coal Transport through Oakland (2016) 40| 1`
19 [https://nocoal.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Public-Health-Advisory-Panel-Assesment-of-](https://nocoal.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Public-Health-Advisory-Panel-Assesment-of-Health-and-Safety-6-14-2016.pdf)
20 [Health-and-Safety-6-14-2016.pdf](https://nocoal.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Public-Health-Advisory-Panel-Assesment-of-Health-and-Safety-6-14-2016.pdf)

21 ⁷ Bart Ostro, Yuanyuan Fang, Marc Carreras Sospedra, Heather Kuiper, Keita Ebisu, Nicholas Spada,
22 Health impact assessment of PM2.5 from uncovered coal trains in the San Francisco Bay Area:
23 Implications for global exposures, Environmental Research, Volume 252, Part 1,2024,118787,ISSN 0013-
24 9351,
25 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2024.118787>.

26 ⁸ Deng Y, Hao H, Zhu Q, Liu Y, Steenland K. Exposure to Multiple Fine Particulate Matter
27 Components and Incident Depression in the US Medicare Population. JAMA Netw Open.
28 2025;8(12):e2551042. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2025.51042

29 ⁹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2012–2022). Supplement to the 2019 integrated science assessment
for particulate matter (Report No. EPA/600/R-22/028). Office of Research and Development; US EPA

1 toxic heavy metals, including arsenic, chromium, and lead, which carry their own serious
2 health risks including cancer, kidney disease, and permanent brain damage in children; and
3

4 **WHEREAS**, dust from coal and petcoke can have significant impacts on fish and
5 wildlife and on water quality in nearby public trust waterbodies such as San Francisco Bay.
6 The transit routes for uncovered coal trains run immediately alongside the San Francisco Bay,
7 its estuary system, and its key tributaries, including Cerrito Creek and Cordonices Creek in
8 Albany, presenting an immediate threat of toxic deposition into navigable waters. Such
9 deposition would directly undermine regional investments in water quality and habitat
10 restoration; and
11

12 **WHEREAS**, the residents of Albany stand in solidarity with the residents of Oakland
13 in their opposition to the handling and storage of coal and petcoke, given the well-documented
14 adverse health effects from these activities; and
15

16 **WHEREAS**, proponents of the proposed OBOT facility have emphasized OBOT's
17 "commitment toward unparalleled environmental responsibility" at the terminal. They have
18 promised that their "preeminent concern regarding the acceptance and handling of all
19 commodities is the mitigation and elimination of fugitive dust such that the ambient air would
20 actually improve" as a result of the project;¹⁰ and
21

22 **WHEREAS**, the Bay Area Air District (the Air District) has indicated that it will
23 consider additional controls on sources of fugitive coal and petcoke dust as part of its
24 commitment to strengthen regulatory controls on fugitive dust; and
25

26 **WHEREAS**, the City of Oakland, alongside neighboring municipalities such as
27 Richmond, Berkeley, and Albany, has historically voted to oppose the transport and storage of
28

29 https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2026-06/pm_isa_supplement_final_report_2022.PDF

¹⁰ Letter from TLS to Hon. Mayor Libby Schaaf (July 15, 2015).

1 hazardous fossil fuels, including coal and petcoke, due to the documented public health and
2 safety concerns; and
3

4 **WHEREAS,** no agency has yet undertaken a review that examined the environmental
5 impacts associated with the handling and storage of coal and petcoke at the proposed OBOT
6 terminal, and the most recent environmental review was undertaken in 2012, before the OBOT
7 developers acknowledged that coal would be transported through the site; and
8

9 **WHEREAS,** the Air District is a Responsible Agency under CEQA that will rely on
10 existing environmental impact reviews in making a permitting decision with respect to OBOT.
11

12 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the City of Albany opposes the
13 transport of coal and petcoke through the city and through nearby cities. The City also opposes
14 the handling and storage of coal at the proposed OBOT facility in Oakland; and
15

16 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the City urges the Air District to adopt measures
17 that would strengthen regulation of coal and petcoke as components of fugitive dust; and
18

19 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that the City urges the Air District to ensure that any
20 air permit it issues to the OBOT facility fully protects Oakland and other Bay Area workers
21 and residents from exposure to dangerous coal and petcoke emissions; and
22

23 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City urges the Air District, in evaluating any
24 application for an air permit for the OBOT terminal, first perform a comprehensive review of
25 all potentially significant environmental impacts of the projected coal handling described by
26 President Trump, as part of a full, up-to-date Environmental Impact Report under the
27 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City strongly supports Assembly Bill 40,
28 signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 30, 2026, which requires such a review
29 under CEQA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council directs the City Manager and City Staff to transmit copies of this Resolution to Oakland Mayor Barbara Lee and the Oakland City Council, the Air District Staff and Board of Directors, the California State Legislature, and the California Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that our community's opposition is officially recorded and recognized in all pending permit evaluations and legal proceedings.

PEGGY McQUAID, MAYOR