



## NEWS

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact: Alex Roth**

Office: (619) 236-6597

Cell: (619) 980-2679

### **SANDERS APPLAUDS COMMISSION VOTE TO RENEW PT. LOMA WASTEWATER PLANT PERMIT** **Ruling Saves Ratepayers \$1.5 Billion While Protecting Environment**

Mayor Jerry Sanders applauded this evening's 8-4 decision by the California Coastal Commission to renew the city's permit for the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant, a vote that saves ratepayers more than \$1.5 billion while also protecting the environment.

"I'd like to thank the Commission for its sensible decision," said Mayor Sanders, who testified at the Commission's hearing in Oceanside. "The evidence clearly shows that our treatment plant poses absolutely no environmental threat. The vote gives us flexibility in the future should we seek to invest in projects such as increased water recycling."

At issue today was whether the Commission should require the city to move to secondary treatment at the Pt. Loma plant.

The plant – which discharges treated wastewater 4.5 miles offshore, 320 feet deep – causes no harm to the ocean environment, according to a study conducted by a team of respected scientists from Scripps Institute of Oceanography, UCSD and SDSU. The city was seeking a renewal of the same permit it has been using to operate the plant for the past decade.

The cost to upgrade the treatment plant to meet secondary specifications would have been more than \$1.5 billion. Ratepayers would have seen their sewer bills skyrocket by more than 70 percent.

Ironically, the risks of environmental damage would have been greater by requiring the city to make the upgrade. Building a secondary treatment facility would entail carving up the coastal bluffs of Point Loma, displacing 1.2 million tons of earth near sensitive habitats. A secondary plant would also consume enormous amounts of electricity and add over 100,000 tons of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere every year.

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