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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Vernon Mayor, city administrator request health advisory for Southeast L.A. County communities due to harmful ambient air emissions from Exide Technologies recycling facility

Vernon, CA – Vernon Mayor William Davis and City Administrator Mark Whitworth today sent a letter to Dr. Barry R. Wallerstein, Executive Officer, South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) formally requesting the regional air pollution regulatory agency to issue a health advisory for L.A. County’s Eastern and Western regions due to potentially harmful ambient air pollutants being released from the Exide Technologies battery recycling facility in Vernon.

In their letter to Dr. Wallerstein, Mayor Davis and Mr. Whitworth wrote:

“The residents and employees of the City of Vernon and our city’s 1,800 private businesses, 55,000 private sector employees, and a potential 100,000+ residents in nearby communities are dependent on your agency’s swift action in regard to this public health and safety matter.”

Mr. Whitworth said Vernon officials were only recently made aware of elevated levels of arsenic air emissions from Exide Technologies’ facility. “We found out about the problem through news media reports,” he said. Mr. Whitworth said Vernon Health and Environmental Control Department staff was prepared to assist SCAQMD staff, as needed. He emphasized that Vernon’s health director lacks the authority to issue local health advisories on air pollution matters.

“We need AQMD to act,” Mr. Whitworth said. “Area residents and workers are justifiably alarmed by these media reports. They have questions. They deserve answers,” the city’s letter to Dr. Wallerstein stated.

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Vernon was founded in 1905 to create jobs in California. Vernon’s 1,800 businesses create more than 105,000 jobs in the Los Angeles area – including 55,000 jobs within the city’s 5.2-mile boundary. The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation designated Vernon as California’s ‘Most Business Friendly City.’ Vernon generates more than \$330 million in state income and sales taxes, \$1.1 billion in taxable spending. Vernon’s businesses provide more than 4.4 billion is salaries and wages annually for workers in Los Angeles County. For more information, go to www.cityofvernon.org.

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