



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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KATHRYN BARGER

January 8, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

We are writing to express support of your proposed expedited permanent closure of the Aliso Canyon Natural Gas Storage Facility, including immediate direction to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) to accelerate the permanent closure plan. We also oppose any proposals to increase storage capacity at Playa De Rey Natural Gas Storage Facility and request that you commission a study to look at the feasibility of closing that facility.

The Aliso Canyon Blowout in 2015 resulted in 97,100 metric tons of methane and 7,300 metric tons of ethane to be released into the atmosphere. It was the largest release of natural gas in American history and caused the relocation of thousands of residents, students, and vulnerable populations.

The County's response has been consistent and appropriate. We have fought for enhanced safety regulations and oversight of natural gas storage facilities in the State. We successfully partnered with the State and the City of Los Angeles on a \$119.0 million settlement that will allow us to study the health effects of the blowout in the North San Fernando Valley. We have preserved open space adjacent to the facility to help prevent further encroachment. We pushed for the comprehensive root cause analysis which found major faults with the Southern California Gas Company and the regulators who oversee the facility. There are still periodic health and odor complaints in the area.

In 2016, Governor Jerry Brown issued an order directing the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and the California Energy Commission to undertake a study and proceed to plan for the Aliso Canyon Facility closure within 10 years.

The State should take all actions necessary to ensure the public's health and safety, and expedite the full closure of Aliso Canyon as soon as possible.

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In regard to the Playa Del Rey Natural Gas Storage Facility, residents of Playa del Rey, Del Rey, Playa Vista, Marina Del Rey, Venice, and Westchester often complain about odors and bubbling water at the Ballona Wetlands. As a result, Senator Ben Allen requested a study from the California Council on Science and Technology. The study found that the Playa Del Rey Facility only provides around one percent of the total natural gas storage across California and yet "has a long history of loss-of-containment incidents and is located near a large population center in a very high wildfire hazard zone." It concluded that it "stands out as a facility with relatively higher risk to health and safety than the other facilities in California."


Considering these findings, we want to ensure that the closure of Aliso Canyon does not result in any proposals to increase the storage capacity at the Playa Del Rey Facility, and we request that you commission a study to look at the feasibility of closing the Playa Del Rey Natural Gas Storage Facility.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,


KATHRYN BARGER
Chair of the Board
Supervisor, Fifth District


HILDA L. SOLIS
Supervisor, First District


MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Supervisor, Second District


SHEILA KUEHL
Supervisor, Third District


JANICE HAHN
Supervisor, Fourth District

c: Los Angeles County State Delegation