

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

July 28, 2026

Ensuring Ongoing Accountability for the East Los Angeles Oil Spill

On May 22, 2026, a pipeline rupture in unincorporated East Los Angeles near Eastern Avenue and Cesar E. Chavez Avenue occurred during telecommunications work by a private company installing fiber optic cable. The spill released an estimated 25,000 gallons of crude oil from an underground pipeline, prompting immediate emergency response and road closures after oil seeped into the ground and entered nearby storm drain systems. Hazardous conditions such as strong odors as well as roadway closures impacted nearby residents, schools, and local businesses ahead of the Memorial Day weekend. Oil ultimately reached the Los Angeles River, with downstream effects reported across Southeast Los Angeles communities including Vernon, Maywood, Bell, Cudahy, South Gate and Lynwood, continuing to Long Beach, where wildlife impacts were also observed.

In response, a Unified Incident Command was established consisting of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Office of Spill Prevention and Response, the Los Angeles County Fire Department, and the Pacific Pipeline System. This Unified Incident Command structure collaborated to direct response and recovery operations in the region, both in the immediate aftermath

MOTION

Mitchell	_____
Horvath	_____
Hahn	_____
Barger	_____
Solis	_____

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and for long-term recovery.

To directly address impacted residents, Supervisor Hilda Solis' staff, in partnership with volunteers from several community-based organizations, conducted door-to-door outreach to distribute information and resources to residents, working to address community concerns amid longstanding distrust of responsible parties in this community. They provided residents with the latest updates, public health information, and guidance on how to file claims related to the incident. In addition, the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) conducted direct outreach to impacted businesses, gathering information and providing resources to address daily losses from the impacts. The Department of Public Health further provided real-time guidance for residents to help safeguard their health and wellbeing throughout the incident, including ways to mitigate the impacts of odors and air pollution.

On June 9, 2026, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a motion to respond, directing the Los Angeles County Departments of Fire, Public Works, Public Health, Economic Opportunity, and Consumer and Business Affairs to respond, including assessing ongoing impacts and assisting with recovery efforts. It further directed County Counsel to open an investigation surrounding the oil spill and explore all potential legal options to recoup the costs for damages and extensive operations for the recovery.

The Unified Command demobilized on June 23, 2026, after completing the Los Angeles River cleanup, the storm drain system cleanup, and mitigated all the endpoints,

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transitioning the response from emergency response to long-term remediation. Although oversight of the response now sits with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and any associated odor complaints and air quality concerns are overseen by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, County departments remain engaged in the ongoing recovery. The Office of Emergency Management, County Fire, and the Department of Public Works (DPW) continue to hold meetings with RWQCB on the cleanup and the regulatory oversight process.

In addition, in response to the motion, DEO's Office of Small Business has been actively assisting affected businesses, providing guidance on claim preparation, documentation requirements, and submission, offering appointments for one-on-one support. They help businesses navigate the full claims process with the Pacific Pipeline System, from start to submission and resolution. They are helping businesses gather key records, which may include business licenses, financial statements, sales reports, bank statements, photographs of damage, canceled contracts, payroll records, repair estimates, cleanup receipts, and other documentation demonstrating impacts or expenses related to the spill. Additionally, personnel from the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction Bureau conducted a door-to-door community outreach effort, distributing information in both English and Spanish that described the underground soil testing activities taking place at the intersection.

Given the history of environmental injustices impacting this community, including ongoing impacts from the fire at the Lineage Logistics warehouse, it is imperative that

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updates are provided to community to ensure their ongoing needs are addressed.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors suspend Section 22.1 of the Rules of the Board for the limited purpose of considering this motion.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Chief Executive Office – Office of Emergency Management, County Counsel, the Department of Public Works, Los Angeles County Fire Department, Department of Public Health, Department of Economic Opportunity, and the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs to provide a public presentation on the ongoing response and recovery efforts for the East Los Angeles oil spill during the July 28, 2026, Public Hearing meeting of the Board of Supervisors, including but not limited to a status update on the following matters:

- Testing of soil, water, and wildlife;
- Remediation efforts;
- Ongoing health impacts related to the oil spill;
- Engagement with relevant intergovernmental partners and stakeholders
- Ongoing efforts to hold all responsible parties accountable, including potential legal action; and
- Claims paid and pending for impacted businesses and residential areas.

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