



MIKE BONIN

City of Los Angeles
Councilmember, Eleventh District

May 22, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for Analysis of Playa del Rey Natural Gas Storage Field Operations

Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing to strongly urge the State of California to undertake a cost-benefit analysis of halting operations at Southern California Gas Company's Playa del Rey gas storage facility in the City of Los Angeles.

The facility operates directly adjacent to my constituents' homes and businesses in Playa del Rey, Playa Vista, Del Rey, and Westchester. In recent years, those residents have made complaints to the city about odors, oily mist, oil field rigs and equipment left idle at sites for long periods of time, a lack of information on operations, possibly unpermitted well maintenance activities, and hillside soil erosion. As recently as January of this year, we have had multiple incidents related to this facility including a 10-minute geyser of sediment and natural gas that was released when a capped well was disturbed during construction activities in Marina del Rey.

In early 2018, the California Council on Science & Technology (CCST) called on the State of California to initiate a cost-benefit analysis on the feasibility of long-term natural gas storage in California. That report further warned that the Playa del Rey facility is of particular concern - more so than even Aliso Canyon - to the health and safety of populations surrounding the site. Further, CCST stated that the Playa del Rey facility does not store or withdraw a significant amount of gas - providing only 1% of the total across California. Their recommendation is clear. The State should commission a cost-benefit analysis including full consideration of risks associated with loss-of-containment from this facility.

Underground gas stores can move through cracks in the earth and other vents to the surface through a phenomenon called gas migration. As it migrates and potentially escapes into the air, it can collect under a structure and become an explosive hazard. This happened in 1985 when the Ross Department Store exploded at Third and Ogden streets in Los Angeles, and the people living near this site deserve to know the risk of it happening here.

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In the wake of the Aliso Canyon disaster, residents are understandably concerned about operations at this site. If an incident similar to the Porter Ranch catastrophe were to happen in Playa del Rey, and it necessitated similar evacuation and buffer zones, it would threaten operations of nearby Los Angeles

International Airport. Further, the facility sits in the middle of the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, which is one of the last significant coastal wetlands in the State of California. The reserve is an important nesting area for dozens of migratory bird species and is a vital resource for the people of this city.

It is for these reasons that I urge you to initiate a focused study of the facility, and what halting operations at the site would mean for citizens of Southern California.

Regards,

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