

March 28, 2022

The Honorable Dave Min
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: SB 953 – Oil and gas leases: state waters: State Lands Commission – Support

Dear Senator Min:

I am writing to thank you for introducing SB 953, which would require the commission to terminate all remaining oil and gas leases under its jurisdiction in tidelands and submerged lands within state waters by December 31, 2023. The bill would authorize the commission to negotiate voluntary relinquishment of a lease, before the termination, upon those terms and conditions as the commission deems necessary and advisable for the protection of the ecological, economic, and other interests of the state.

The devastating October 3rd Huntington Beach oil spill, which spewed up to 126,000 gallons along the Orange County coastline, and the subsequent leaking from the pipeline on November 20th, once again highlights the urgent need to end offshore oil production in California.

The three platforms, Eva and Emmy in Huntington Beach and Esther off Seal Beach, installed between 1963 and 1985, have operated beyond their intended lifespan and pose an ongoing risk to our coast. The risk of a spill more than doubles as pipelines age from 20 to 40 years.

The spill, which came from a pipeline carrying oil from Platform Elly, closed fisheries and beaches and oiled sensitive wetlands and killed countless marine mammals, fish, and birds. The spill showed just how vulnerable our coast is to the risks of offshore drilling. The ocean is part of California's values and identity, as a result business thrives on our beautiful ocean and beaches.

California's ocean economy is valued at \$45 billion annually and provides 500,000 jobs in recreation, hotels, restaurants, charter boats, guide businesses, and gear shops. This ocean economy depends on clean water and air that offshore drilling threatens.

These three platforms provide a very small amount of oil and a small number of jobs, two of which are owned by Texas companies. Despite the California Legislature finding in 1994 that offshore oil and gas production "poses an unacceptably high risk of damage and disruption to the marine environment of the state," these three offshore oil and gas platforms in California waters continue to operate and still remain a threat.

With this initial horrible spill and continued leakage, we know that if we don't decommission the oil infrastructure off our coastline, it is only a matter of "when", not "if" the next big spill happens.

With the recent COP26 proposals and the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report on the state of the climate being referred to as a "Code Red for Humanity," it is imperative that we end our worldwide addiction to fossil fuels. California's oil is some of the most difficult and expensive to extract, meaning that it results in even more greenhouse gas emissions. End offshore drilling off the coast of California is the logical first step to a clean energy future.

I thank you again for introducing this important legislation and urge your colleagues in the legislature to vote aye on SB 953.

Sincerely,