

From: [Suzanne Harvey](#)
To: [ClerkoftheBoard](#)
Subject: Re. Agenda Item #66
Date: Saturday, September 9, 2023 6:51:47 PM

WARNING: If you believe this message may be malicious use the Phish Alert Button to report it or forward the message to Email.Security@ventura.org.

I am writing to encourage you, the Board of Supervisors, to expand the oil well safety buffer policies here in Ventura County and resist efforts by the oil industry to re-write and weaken current policies limiting emissions of toxic pollutants. I am also writing to express my dismay at your lack of transparency and seeming backroom deal-making re. efforts to weaken existing regulations.

Previously you stood in strong defense of responsible emissions policies and now, under pressure of litigation, you are backsliding and entering in to settlement negotiations with the oil and gas industry to weaken those policies rather than standing your ground. And to make matters worse, you have entered in to these negotiations without inviting, at a minimum, those groups that had been formal parties in the lawsuits to be part of these new discussions. We the public's only indication that something was afoot was via an agenda item buried under "Closed Session meetings". That is just wrong.

If approved, this new proposed settlement agreement pretty much effectively gives the oil and gas industry free rein to continue business as usual polluting of our local environment. And it is all part of a trend.

Earlier this year you reversed a decision that would have stopped a 23 oil well re-drill project located in the middle of agricultural fields and less than 1,000 feet from homes, a school, and a park.

Due to permit loopholes, these wells can now be re-drilled without benefit of environmental review.

Over 400 wells in Ventura County have been identified as orphaned and deserted and left to taxpayers to clean-up. In fact, some of these wells are located on parcels with new drilling already approved for *new* drilling right next to them.

The epicenter of the recent 5.1 earthquake was right in the middle of a large oil field where fracking and wastewater injection takes place.

It is your job to keep our communities safe and, as regards this particular issue, you have the support of the California Attorney General and, County Council. You are in a strong and popular (with the people) position and, have a strong legal defense against industry.

As noted by California's Attorney General, "These lawsuits are misguided. Ventura County should be applauded for its 2040 General Plan, not taken to court. For

decades, environmental inequities have been perpetuated by local land use policies. We are glad to see Ventura County try to break the cycle by moving new oil and gas wells away from schools and homes and restricting unnecessary emissions of toxic pollutants. As my office makes clear in our brief, these oil and gas policies do not conflict with state law and are an important example of responsible governance.”

Please stand with us, the people of Ventura County, on the side of public health and safety. You are in a position of strength.

Respectfully,

Suzanne Harvey - Ojai