

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
SUBJECT: November 10 Legacy Permit Amendments

Honorable Supervisors,

I urge you to reject the amendments to the coastal and non-coastal zoning ordinances before you today. The proposed amendments will hurt my job and the industry that affords me the opportunity to live and work in Ventura County. Oil and gas employees and contractors work every day to ensure our community and state at large has a safe, affordable and reliable energy supply.

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Please support our local workforce, local economy, and the energy needs of today. I urge you to reject this radical and unnecessary policy change.

Thank you,

Lowell Pollema, Manager of Technology / Aera Energy LLC

County of Ventura Board of Supervisor Hearing Case PL20-0052 Exhibit 39- Public Comment Letters Received
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**From:** rcy51@sbcglobal.net  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:52 AM  
**To:** ClerkoftheBoard  
**Subject:** November 10 Legacy Permit Amendments

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Terre Darwin

R&R Pumping Unit Repair & Service

Office Mgr.

93001

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**Rebekah Davis**

Aera Energy LLC

Administrative Assistant

**Ventura Production Unit**

**3608 North Ventura Ave**

**Ventura, Ca 93001**

Email [radavis@aeraenergy.com](mailto:radavis@aeraenergy.com)

**Desk 805-648-8235 ~ Mobile 805-258-3143**

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors

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Richard Yarbrough

R&R Pumping Unit Repair & Service

Owner

93001

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Edward Brumfield R&R Pumping Unit Repair & Service

Safety Manager 93001

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Thanks,  
Jessica Leung  
Facilities Engineer  
Aera Energy LLC  
Ventura, CA 93001  
661-858-3140

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Nathan Nichols, Aera Energy LLC/ Production Operator, 93023



Honorable Supervisors,

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Matt Wyatt

Aera Energy LLC

805-207-5692

[Mswyatt@aeraenergy.com](mailto:Mswyatt@aeraenergy.com)

93003

Honorable Supervisors,

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Thank you, Mitchell Geroy, Aera Energy, Production Operator Ventura.

Sent from my iPhone

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Lorenzo Luna

Aera Energy

Production Operator

93060

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Joel Newcomb  
AERA Energy LLC  
Ventura Instrument Tech.  
805 648-8510 office  
805 340-3112 mobile

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Jose Alcala-AERA Energy LLC/Production Operator, 93003

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Bob Biggerstaff

Aera Energy LLC

Process Specialist

93003

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~~(Name, Company/ Job Title, Zip Code)~~[Chris Shreffler](#)

[MRC Global](#)

[Branch Manager](#)

[Ventura Resident](#)

[919 Peninsula St](#)

[Ventura, CA 93001](#)

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Lee Morris

Aera Energy Clam Operator 93004



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(Name, Company/ Job Title, Zip Code)

Regards,  
Norman Rosario  
Aera Energy LLC  
E & I Tech  
Ventura, Ca 93015

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***Dave Bustos***

Instrument Technician

Aera Energy LLC

Zip code: 93015

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Thanks,

Craig Matheson  
E&I Tech  
Aera Energy LLC  
93003

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Please support our local workforce, local economy, and the energy needs of today. I urge you to reject this radical and unnecessary policy change.

Garrett Moser

I am a FIELD OPERATOR and I am a proudly employed by  
AERA ENERGY LLC.

**93003**

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
SUBJECT: November 10 Legacy Permit Amendments

Honorable Supervisors,

I urge you to reject the amendments to the coastal and non-coastal zoning ordinances before you today. The proposed amendments will hurt my job and the industry that affords me the opportunity to live and work in Ventura County. Oil and gas employees and contractors work every day to ensure our community and state at large has a safe, affordable and reliable energy supply.

The move to require discretionary review of legacy CUPs is part of a concerted effort by some Board members to shut down all oil and natural gas operations in Ventura County and with it thousands of jobs and lost tax revenue.

Proponents of such shutdowns often claim that job losses in the oil and natural gas industry are acceptable because oil and gas workers can simply find jobs in green energy. The truth is that green jobs in California pay less than oil and gas jobs, and a great majority of green energy infrastructure is produced out of state. According to a recent report released by the State Building and Construction Trades Council, green jobs in Ventura County, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, paid on average 35 percent less than oil and gas jobs. A forced career change to a job that pays less is simply not acceptable.

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Nick Castanon

Process Supervisor

Aera Energy LLC

Ventura Ca 93001

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
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Please support our local workforce, local economy, and the energy needs of today. I urge you to reject this radical and unnecessary policy change.

Jere B Dietz

Aera Energy LLC

Production Supervisor

93001

Honorable Supervisors,

I urge you to reject the amendments to the coastal and non-coastal zoning ordinances before you today. The proposed amendments will hurt many jobs and the industry that affords so many people the opportunity to live and work in Ventura County. Oil and gas employees and contractors work every day to ensure our community and state at large has a safe, affordable and reliable energy supply.

The move to require discretionary review of legacy CUPs is part of a concerted effort by some Board members to shut down all oil and natural gas operations in Ventura County and with it thousands of jobs and lost tax revenue.

Proponents of such shutdowns often claim that job losses in the oil and natural gas industry are acceptable because oil and gas workers can simply find jobs in green energy. The truth is that green jobs in California pay less than oil and gas jobs, and a great majority of green energy infrastructure is produced out of state. Green energy infrastructure also requires significant support from oil and natural gas in order to be mined and developed. According to a recent report released by the State Building and Construction Trades Council, green jobs in Ventura County, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, paid on average 35 percent less than oil and gas jobs. A forced career change to a job that pays less is simply not acceptable.

Our companies operate under the strictest environmental regulations in the world. We all share a commitment to clean air and water in our community. Responsible oil and gas production must be part of the equation for affordable, reliable and equitable energy policies. Shutting down oil and gas in California, the state that uses the most oil and gas in the nation, will force us to rely on importing oil from foreign sources that do not share our values and high regulatory standards.

Please support our local workforce, local economy, and the energy needs of today. I urge you to reject this radical and unnecessary policy change.

Ted Witt  
Vice President  
Aera Energy LLC  
1054 Via Arroyo  
Ventura, CA 93003

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
SUBJECT: November 10 Legacy Permit Amendments

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Allen Biddle  
Basic Well Services Supervisor  
93036



Honorable Supervisors,

I urge you to reject the amendments to the coastal and non-coastal zoning ordinances before you today. The proposed amendments will hurt my job and the industry that affords me the opportunity to live and work in Ventura County. Oil and gas employees and contractors work every day to ensure our community and state at large has a safe, affordable and reliable energy supply.

The move to require discretionary review of legacy CUPs is part of a concerted effort by some Board members to shut down all oil and natural gas operations in Ventura County and with it thousands of jobs and lost tax revenue.

Proponents of such shutdowns often claim that job losses in the oil and natural gas industry are acceptable because oil and gas workers can simply find jobs in green energy. The truth is that green jobs in California pay less than oil and gas jobs, and a great majority of green energy infrastructure is produced out of state. According to a recent report released by the State Building and Construction Trades Council, green jobs in Ventura County, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, paid on average 35 percent less than oil and gas jobs. A forced career change to a job that pays less is simply not acceptable.

Our companies operate under the strictest environmental regulations in the world. We all share a commitment to clean air and water in our community. Responsible oil and gas production must be part of the equation for affordable, reliable and equitable energy policies.

Please support our local workforce, local economy, and the energy needs of today. I urge you to reject this radical and unnecessary policy change.

David Davenport  
Aera Energy LLC/Mechanic  
168 Bundren street  
Oak View Ca 93022

**From:** [Long, Kelly](#)  
**To:** [ClerkoftheBoard](#); [Miller, Brian](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: A final rebuttal Dr. Levin Re: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19  
**Date:** Friday, October 30, 2020 3:20:29 PM

---

Best regards,

Kelly

Kelly Long  
Ventura County Supervisor  
District 3  
1203 Flynn Rd, Suite 220  
Camarillo, CA 93012  
(805) 654-2276 Office  
[www.Ventura.org](http://www.Ventura.org)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Gina Bacon <[gina@bringinghomethebacon.biz](mailto:gina@bringinghomethebacon.biz)>  
**Date:** October 30, 2020 at 1:52:24 PM PDT  
**To:** "Levin, Robert" <[Robert.Levin@ventura.org](mailto:Robert.Levin@ventura.org)>  
**Cc:** Citizens Journal <[editor@citizensjournal.us](mailto:editor@citizensjournal.us)>, "Zaragoza, John" <[John.Zaragoza@ventura.org](mailto:John.Zaragoza@ventura.org)>, "Bennett, Steve" <[Steve.Bennett@ventura.org](mailto:Steve.Bennett@ventura.org)>, "Parks, Linda" <[Linda.Parks@ventura.org](mailto:Linda.Parks@ventura.org)>, "Huber, Bob" <[Bob.Huber@ventura.org](mailto:Bob.Huber@ventura.org)>, "Long, Kelly" <[kelly.long@ventura.org](mailto:kelly.long@ventura.org)>, "Powers, Michael" <[Michael.Powers@ventura.org](mailto:Michael.Powers@ventura.org)>, Debra Tash <[debratash@gmail.com](mailto:debratash@gmail.com)>, Michael Hernandez <[constitutionmike@gmail.com](mailto:constitutionmike@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: A final rebuttal Dr. Levin Re: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

**CAUTION:** If this email looks suspicious, DO NOT click. Forward to [Spam.Manager@ventura.org](mailto:Spam.Manager@ventura.org)

Dear Dr. Levin,

I have not received an acknowledgement for this email, but in the interim here is an update on Governor Newsom's Lawsuit.

<https://blog.electkevinkiley.com/a-pivotal-moment-in-the-fight-against-newsom/>

Loved this statement below by Kevin Kiley directly, "With national politics dominating the 2020 election, it unfortunately hasn't served as a clear referendum on Newsom's failures. But after Tuesday, this will become the foremost political imperative in California and possibly the whole country: defeating a Governor who has accelerated our state's decline beyond anything we could have imagined."

This may be Gavin Newsom's one great service. By putting every perversity of our State Capitol on display like never before, he may be catalyzing a fundamental realignment in California politics."

Best,

Gina

Gina Bacon

[www.BusinessCoachStrategist.com](http://www.BusinessCoachStrategist.com)

Business Coach / Strategist

"Favorite word ever, Synergy!"

[www.WeHaveRights.Org](http://www.WeHaveRights.Org)

---

**From:** Gina Bacon <gina@bringinghomethebacon.biz>

**Date:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 at 12:29 PM

**To:** "Robert.Levin@ventura.org" <Robert.Levin@ventura.org>

**Cc:** Citizens Journal <editor@citizensjournal.us>, "John.Zaragoza@ventura.org"

<John.Zaragoza@ventura.org>, "Steve.Bennett@ventura.org"

<Steve.Bennett@ventura.org>, "Linda.Parks@ventura.org"

<Linda.Parks@ventura.org>, "bob.huber@ventura.org"

<bob.huber@ventura.org>, "kelly.long@ventura.org" <kelly.long@ventura.org>,

"michael.powers@ventura.org" <michael.powers@ventura.org>, Debra Tash

<debratash@gmail.com>, Michael Hernandez <constitutionmike@gmail.com>

**Subject:** FW: A final rebuttal Dr. Levin Re: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

Dear Dr. Levin,

I would like to take this opportunity to discuss your statement below, I have highlighted in hopes to begin a healthy debate about Herd Immunity, a recognition of a biological facts.

I found this video when researching for alternative solutions since the case count on MSM is a positive thing, herd immunity, but MSM keeps spinning the CASE count to be a negative thing. I already know Dr. Fauci isn't a fan of this video, but for the "greater good" as you stated below, I'd love to start a healthy debate on alternative solutions with more of a moral approach, the more scientifically based approach since our county you are heading up is suffering collateral damage from the lockdown that is ENORMOUS while the majority of the population is at **VERY LITTLE** risk of the disease. With this very low ratio on the front lines, it's time to start helping everyone.

Additionally, when you take in consideration of the following actions occurring in California as well, against Governor Newsom, I would believe you would take this in consideration as well, considering you are more likely to die in a car accident than covid, and it's NOT because of the lockdown; arguable with Walmart stores open, etc.

A. **James Gallagher and Kevin Kiley, Plaintiffs, v. Gavin Newsom**, in his official capacity as Governor of California, Defendant. (This lawsuit is addressing Governor Newsom tyrant actions of procuring a legislative without going through the correct departments because of "covid") Bypassing a procedure or

policy puts Governor Newsom and us in danger.

<https://blog.electkevinkiley.com/briefs-in-gallagher-and-kiley-v-newsom/>

B. The **Conference of North State Representatives** -

<https://blog.electkevinkiley.com/the-conference-of-north-state-representatives-2/>

a. Letter to Chairman Steve Lambert -

<https://blog.electkevinkiley.com/letter-convening-conference-of-north-state-leaders-2/>

C. **Donald P. Wagner, Orange County Supervisor, letter to the President of the United States**, requesting help on *"directing Federal COVID relief funds straight to California's counties, instead of allowing the governor to hoard them, re-direct them to his favored communities, or use them to extort us into complying with his unscientific directives."* Letter attached, DonaldPWagner.jpg

It's absolutely extraordinary what work is being done on the behalf 39+ Million people in California, wouldn't you agree? Please find the link below in regards to an alternative approach that is more humane, moral and developed based off science. The cure can't be worse than the disease, right? Can you imagine if George Washington STOPPED the Revolutionary War because of the pandemic the fighters endured? We are in the same situation again, but this time you are stopping us. What happens to America, what happens to California?

Dissenting scientist issue Covid-19 herd immunity declaration -->

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rz\\_Z7Gf1aRE&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rz_Z7Gf1aRE&feature=youtu.be)

From: "Levin, Robert" <Robert.Levin@ventura.org> Sent: Saturday, October 24, 2020 6:01pm

"The measures that have been taken have had a terrible impact on so many things - depression, loss of business, physical abuse, loneliness. Again, the balance is in the **eyes of the beholder**. These things were considered and weighed against the loss of life from the disease. Both sides of this choice can point to human misery. I believe that saving the lives we have saved, and I'm confident that lives have been saved, is for the greater good."

Thank you for your time and I am looking forward to your feedback. I am more than willing to meet face-to-face for more of an in-depth conversation where no one is misunderstood so our solution for our county can begin immediately since the manifestation of collateral damage started months ago.

Sincerely,

Gina

Gina Bacon

[www.BusinessCoachStrategist.com](http://www.BusinessCoachStrategist.com)

Business Coach / Strategist

"Favorite word ever, Synergy!"

-----Original Message-----

From: "publisher@citizensjournal.us" <publisher@citizensjournal.us>

Sent: Saturday, October 24, 2020 11:28pm

To: "Levin, Robert" <Robert.Levin@ventura.org>

Cc: "Citizens Journal" <editor@citizensjournal.us>, "Zaragoza, John" <john.zaragoza@ventura.org>, "Bennett, Steve" <steve.bennett@ventura.org>, "Parks, Linda" <linda.parks@ventura.org>, "Huber, Bob" <bob.huber@ventura.org>, "Long, Kelly" <kelly.long@ventura.org>, "Powers, Michael" <michael.powers@ventura.org>

Subject: RE: A final rebuttal Dr. Levin Re: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

**Hi Dr. Levin:**

**I believe you are acting in good faith, but in deference to the wishes of misguided state authority. Those wishes are based upon an equation which is flawed and rooted in an initially far gloomier assessment of the dangers of COVID-19 than was warranted, if not at the onset, then now. The measures taken are also of questionable legality in that they are not proportionate to the threat, insufficiently mindful of the consequences, based upon an arguably unconstitutional statute and not even in compliance with the 30 day renewal terms by the legislative bodies. Alternatives exist.**

**This is not the middle ages Bubonic Plague. It is far less serious than originally feared. But the runaway train of government bureaucracy-international, national, state, even local, and the panic induced in much of the population, cannot easily be stopped or even redirected. Whether that be from sheer momentum, refusal to admit error, or darker motives- I can't say.**

**The downside of all this is enormous. We have racked up more debt in a few months than during the nation's first 200 years, for questionable returns. Debra Tash and I have already summarized the negative societal and fiscal impact, which is staggering. More lives are likely disrupted or ended than saved.**

**I have a real problem with your "greater good" assessment and don't believe that you and Newsom should be making it. I'm glad that the federal govt. is sticking to constitutional principles, with just guidelines and assistance, deferring to state rules, but am not particularly happy with some of the stuff our state is doing. Not all, mind you- some good stuff is being done. One of the best has been working with business and institutions to develop ways of minimizing spread when companies are open. Some of this will work equally well to combat spread of other diseases. I am glad to see that much has been reopened, but keeping much of society still hobbled is wrong.**

**It's interesting that tens of thousands of doctors, at least one high official in the WHO, most of the President's key people, the President himself and the governors of dozens of states, seem to agree with me, that the widespread lockdown (a prison term) approach is the wrong one for this situation at this time.**

**The so-called stimulus measures by the trillions will have a profound**

negative effect on our fiscal and economic stability, but they are mere band-aids. If and when interest rates rise again, they will create unsustainable debt service burdens and force either some kind of biblical-like debt repudiation, hyperinflation, or both. The Federal Reserve, Congress, states and municipalities are about out of tricks. So what about the aforementioned "alternatives?" How about far more protection for the most at risk- the oldest and sickest, as we ease off on the business, government and religious lockdowns? That would include Newsom's promised but never delivered food delivery effort, help with isolation in the most humane ways possible, identification and availability of therapies, better other preventive measures in the form of exercise opportunities, vitamins, sunlight, etc.

An *effective* vaccine may or may not be available anytime soon, or ever, as my former next door neighbor, who was a nationally known virologist, told me. But effective therapies already are and just need more validation. Our President showed rapid and remarkable progress when he was finally stricken with COVID-19.

When I go into flu season mode, I wash hands more, avoid having people breathe, cough or sneeze on me, load up on vitamins, eat and drink healthy. Some people wear masks- have at it, folks.

It is time to reassess the current approach. State and County legislative bodies are seemingly AWOL on this and need to weigh in more, since they can help bring in a bigger picture/perspective. That's YOU, silent BOS folks, not one of whom has ever responded to a word I've written you on this subject. Only Dr, Levin and CEO Mike Powers have.

Regards,

George Miller

**Publisher@CitizensJournal.us**

cid:CJLogo2020Small.jpg@1603605868.032



-----Original Message-----

From: "Editor" <editor@citizensjournal.us>

Sent: Saturday, October 24, 2020 6:48pm

To: "Levin, Robert" <Robert.Levin@ventura.org>,

"publisher@citizensjournal.us" <publisher@citizensjournal.us>

Cc: "Zaragoza, John" <John.Zaragoza@ventura.org>, "Bennett, Steve"

<Steve.Bennett@ventura.org>, "Parks, Linda"

<Linda.Parks@ventura.org>, "Huber, Bob" <Bob.Huber@ventura.org>,

"Long, Kelly" <Kelly.Long@ventura.org>, "Zaragoza, John" <john.zaragoza@ventura.org>  
Subject: Re: A final rebuttal Dr. Levin Re: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

Develop treatments, vaccines if possible, etc. all pathways on a road where we should be headed. We agreed to flatten the curve, not our society. Please don't give me the excuse of doing this for the greater good. So much evil has been done under that pronouncement. I still maintain that quarantining the healthy makes no sense whatsoever, your article supported that assumption. Yet we've been conditioned in a way by these lockdowns to accept government overreach. We've had our freedoms given back to us piecemeal by the powers that be.

The governor's tiered system is unreasonable and therefore harmful. You can't do this to people, switch off their means of survival with a mere tick of a fictional needle.

I do wish to thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to interview you on this subject if you are so inclined, or anyone else on this thread.

What we believe doesn't make it true. By their fruits you shall know them. In all honesty, the fruits born out of the handling of this virus have soured the public. It is time to be rational again and not afraid.

Thank you as always, Robert.

All the best, Debbie

-----Original Message-----

From: "Levin, Robert" <Robert.Levin@ventura.org>  
Sent: Saturday, October 24, 2020 6:01pm  
To: "Citizens Journal" <editor@citizensjournal.us>, "publisher@citizensjournal.us" <publisher@citizensjournal.us>  
Cc: "Zaragoza, John" <John.Zaragoza@ventura.org>, "Bennett, Steve" <Steve.Bennett@ventura.org>, "Parks, Linda" <Linda.Parks@ventura.org>, "Huber, Bob" <Bob.Huber@ventura.org>, "Long, Kelly" <Kelly.Long@ventura.org>, "Powers, Michael" <Michael.Powers@ventura.org>  
Subject: RE: A final rebuttal Dr. Levin Re: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

Debra, on closer examination, some of these outbreaks did involve a quarantine of an entire population. When part of a population wasn't quarantined, it was because there was no evidence of disease. This disease, COVID-19, is everywhere in our country.

The measures that have been taken have had a terrible impact on so many things - depression, loss of business, physical abuse, loneliness. Again, the balance is in the eyes of the beholder. These things were considered and weighed against the loss of life from the disease. Both

sides of this choice can point to human misery. I believe that saving the lives we have saved, and I'm confident that lives have been saved, is for the greater good.

---

**From:** Editor <editor@citizensjournal.us>

**Sent:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 5:29 PM

**To:** Levin, Robert <Robert.Levin@ventura.org>; publisher@citizensjournal.us

**Cc:** Zaragoza, John <John.Zaragoza@ventura.org>; Bennett, Steve <Steve.Bennett@ventura.org>; Parks, Linda <Linda.Parks@ventura.org>; Huber, Bob <Bob.Huber@ventura.org>; Long, Kelly <Kelly.Long@ventura.org>; Powers, Michael <Michael.Powers@ventura.org>

**Subject:** A final rebuttal Dr. Levin Re: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

**CAUTION:** If this email looks suspicious, DO NOT click. Forward to

[Spam.Manager@ventura.org](mailto:Spam.Manager@ventura.org)

Hello Robert,

I have reviewed the NCBI article on the history of quarantining specific populations which you linked to below. Seems the practice grew out of an application of common sense in regards to isolating those who were infected and those who could be carriers of disease. Yes, in some ways, those regulations did trample upon the civil rights of certain people, but not all the people. And there it is - the difference between then and now. With the plague it was those in transient who were quarantined along with the sick, sailors and others who were exposed to certain vectors of infection. Much the same with cholera and the isolation of populations that were affected/infected and a limitation of travel. Common sense. Even with the 1918 Spanish flu, which spread worldwide because of a global conflict, a quarantine wasn't applied to entire nations. BTW, my great aunt died in that pandemic while my grandmother, who had the flu, gave birth to my mother. Life is a risky journey. Even the recent outbreak cited in the article of the SARS virus didn't warrant the economic strangulation of people's livelihoods.

In all honesty, you can't really say, unless exercising a deep dive into the data, that the course undertaken by the current public health gurus have saved, or prolonged, lives by implementing this draconian scheme to close businesses and put people out of work, or shut the doors of houses of worship. A bony finger is being pointed at the Midwest now with surging case numbers and yet it's rising in the stricter states as well. Do cases mean anything now with a declining death rate? Hospitals operating just fine and are not at capacity? Robert, it's a virus, man-made or natural, it will remain with us for years to come, vaccine or no vaccine. We have to learn to live with it as humanity as in ages past with all diseases. Live with it or we will die a far worse death, a society squeezed dry by ill placed policies. Please ask a family member of someone who has taken their own life over depression or loss of a business they worked for and now is



shuttered how those family members feel about these lockdowns. Weren't those people lives worth prolonging? Just asking.

Best regards,

Debra Tash, editor in-chief

On 10/24/2020 1:31 PM, Levin, Robert wrote:

Responses below.

---

**From:** Editor <[editor@citizensjournal.us](mailto:editor@citizensjournal.us)>

**Sent:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 12:40 PM

**To:** Levin, Robert <[Robert.Levin@ventura.org](mailto:Robert.Levin@ventura.org)>;  
[publisher@citizensjournal.us](mailto:publisher@citizensjournal.us)

**Cc:** Zaragoza, John <[John.Zaragoza@ventura.org](mailto:John.Zaragoza@ventura.org)>; Bennett, Steve <[Steve.Bennett@ventura.org](mailto:Steve.Bennett@ventura.org)>; Parks, Linda <[Linda.Parks@ventura.org](mailto:Linda.Parks@ventura.org)>; Huber, Bob <[Bob.Huber@ventura.org](mailto:Bob.Huber@ventura.org)>; Long, Kelly <[Kelly.Long@ventura.org](mailto:Kelly.Long@ventura.org)>; Powers, Michael <[Michael.Powers@ventura.org](mailto:Michael.Powers@ventura.org)>;  
[hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us](mailto:hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us)

**Subject:** Re: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

**CAUTION:** If this email looks suspicious, DO NOT click. Forward to [Spam.Manager@ventura.org](mailto:Spam.Manager@ventura.org)

Hello Dr. Levin,

Thank you for your responses. I still have open questions on how this virus has been handled. Please site when in history healthy populations have been quarantined. **There is an excellent article called Lessons from the History of Quarantine that catalogues this:**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3559034/>

The way government has dealt with this virus has definitely perplexed me. Also how do you plan to unravel what the actually deaths within our county can be attributed to, a COVID 19 infection cause of death? What you noted is subjective. Where can the public get hard data on this as opposed to chalking it up to a contributing factor. You write that the patient could have lived another ten years without the disease, but how can you verify that in each case? It just doesn't make sense. Please advise. **I think we see this in fundamentally different ways from different perspectives. We may just have to agree to disagree. When something takes your life before your god-given tenure on earth, then I see that as a cause of death. When smoking cigarettes kills you at 54 instead of an American's life expectancy of 78, I see smoking as a killer, as a cause of death and as something dangerous that must be addressed. That is a proper target of public health. That smoker might have been destined to die of alcoholic cirrhosis in 3 months instead but the smoking didn't give him that chance. COVID has killed over 150 people in our county so far**

just as influenza killed 49 people three years ago. Does it make sense to ignore it when there are steps we can take to prevent it?

Best regards,

Debra Tash, editor in-chief

On 10/24/2020 10:15 AM, Levin, Robert wrote:

Comments in [green](#).

**From:** [publisher@citizensjournal.us](mailto:publisher@citizensjournal.us)

[<publisher@citizensjournal.us>](mailto:publisher@citizensjournal.us)

**Sent:** Saturday, October 24, 2020 1:03 AM

**To:** Levin, Robert [<Robert.Levin@ventura.org>](mailto:Robert.Levin@ventura.org)

**Cc:** Zaragoza, John

[<John.Zaragoza@ventura.org>](mailto:John.Zaragoza@ventura.org); Bennett, Steve

[<Steve.Bennett@ventura.org>](mailto:Steve.Bennett@ventura.org); Parks, Linda

[<Linda.Parks@ventura.org>](mailto:Linda.Parks@ventura.org); Huber, Bob

[<Bob.Huber@ventura.org>](mailto:Bob.Huber@ventura.org); Zaragoza, John

[<John.Zaragoza@ventura.org>](mailto:John.Zaragoza@ventura.org); Long, Kelly

[<Kelly.Long@ventura.org>](mailto:Kelly.Long@ventura.org); Powers, Michael

[<Michael.Powers@ventura.org>](mailto:Michael.Powers@ventura.org); Citizens Journal

[<editor@citizensjournal.us>](mailto:editor@citizensjournal.us);

[hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us](mailto:hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us)

**Subject:** RE: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

**CAUTION:** If this email looks suspicious, DO NOT click. Forward to [Spam.Manager@ventura.org](mailto:Spam.Manager@ventura.org)

**Thanks for your response, Dr. Levin.**

**We posted your letter as a response to the article so that it will get maximum visibility.**

**In the article we made some points about those items, namely:**

- Many are false positives.
- Any death even remotely associated is shown as a COVID-19 death (or hospitalization), which is ridiculous. In many cases COVID-19 was not the proximate or main cause of reported COVID-19 deaths. We can't know the exact numbers because of how data are collected and reporting is done, but we do know that almost all deaths have "co-morbidity" or other serious conditions present.

So, true COVID-19 deaths are likely far lower than reported.

We have read stories that there are large numbers of false positives, based upon sampling. Could those have been other than PCR tests? Neither the PCR nor the antigen tests are thought to have a significant amount of false positives. But the only way to tell that would be subsequent retests, possibly multiple times. If the testing method or execution is inherently inaccurate, perhaps only a more precise method would do it. We have also heard that dead viruses, antibodies, even similar viruses, may sometimes be interpreted as positives when they are not. I suppose the opposite problem might also occur- a false negative? The PCR test detects live virus, dead virus and even fragments of the virus. Live virus is only present, as a general rule, for 8 or 9 days. Remnants of the virus that will give a positive test may be present for 3 months and maybe longer.

While presence of COVID-19 can bring harmful symptoms/infection, many people show no symptoms at all or survive it. In some cases, VC reports mentioned car accidents or drug overdoses as the proximate cause of death. These have been very few. Only 1 drug death as far as I know and I'm not aware of any auto accidents. Most, from what we heard from people who have examined reports, were more ambiguous. So, would I be accurate in saying that many of the deaths were not *caused* by COVID-19, but many had it as a contributing factor, even if it wasn't the main cause? Many of the deaths were in people with comorbidities. However, they wouldn't have died if their COVID infection hadn't come along.

For example, my own brother-in-law died at 80 and had COVID-19, per doctors. His doctor and family concluded that he was very sick (obese, bad heart and diabetes) and would have died within a year anyway, but COVID-19 definitely accelerated his demise, like you wrote can happen. Doctors are notoriously bad at predicting when a person will die. My wife, who is a physician, after meeting my mother's new boyfriend (who had a number of ailments and a

terrible diet) walked away saying, "he'll be dead within the year". He was 79 and this was 23 years ago. He is 102 and still alive, ambulating with a walker and clear-headed.

Regards,

George Miller

**[Publisher@CitizensJournal.us](mailto:Publisher@CitizensJournal.us)**

cid:image001.jpg@01D6AA2E.6C79FDC0



-----Original Message-----

From: "Levin, Robert" <[Robert.Levin@ventura.org](mailto:Robert.Levin@ventura.org)>

Sent: Friday, October 23, 2020 7:15pm

To: "[publisher@citizensjournal.us](mailto:publisher@citizensjournal.us)"

<[publisher@citizensjournal.us](mailto:publisher@citizensjournal.us)>, "Zaragoza, John"

<[John.Zaragoza@ventura.org](mailto:John.Zaragoza@ventura.org)>, "Bennett, Steve"

<[Steve.Bennett@ventura.org](mailto:Steve.Bennett@ventura.org)>, "Parks, Linda"

<[Linda.Parks@ventura.org](mailto:Linda.Parks@ventura.org)>, "Huber, Bob"

<[Bob.Huber@ventura.org](mailto:Bob.Huber@ventura.org)>, "Zaragoza, John"

<[John.Zaragoza@ventura.org](mailto:John.Zaragoza@ventura.org)>, "Long, Kelly"

<[Kelly.Long@ventura.org](mailto:Kelly.Long@ventura.org)>, "Powers, Michael"

<[Michael.Powers@ventura.org](mailto:Michael.Powers@ventura.org)>

Cc: "Citizens Journal" <[editor@citizensjournal.us](mailto:editor@citizensjournal.us)>,

"[hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us](mailto:hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us)"

<[hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us](mailto:hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us)>

Subject: RE: To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

There are many points made in your article but I will address just a couple of the main points.

It is said that many of the tests are false positives.

There is no evidence to support this. The PCR test is a reliable and sensitive test. If you get a positive result from the test, you should accept the fact that you are infected or have been recently with COVID-19.

It was also stated that : "any death...is shown as a COVID-19 death". Of course a death in a person with one or more co-morbidities who gets a COVID-19 infection is counted as a COVID death (actually

the doctor filling out the death certificate can choose to not count it). We do the same with influenza. A person is going through life with high blood pressure and diabetes gets COVID and dies. They would not have died, might have lived for 10 more years, had they not gotten COVID. The infection has tipped the scale toward a burden beyond which they could carry. A common cold would not have done that to them.

**From:** [publisher@citizensjournal.us](mailto:publisher@citizensjournal.us)

<[publisher@citizensjournal.us](mailto:publisher@citizensjournal.us)>

**Sent:** Friday, October 23, 2020 5:29 PM

**To:** Zaragoza, John

<[John.Zaragoza@ventura.org](mailto:John.Zaragoza@ventura.org)>; Bennett, Steve

<[Steve.Bennett@ventura.org](mailto:Steve.Bennett@ventura.org)>; Parks, Linda

<[Linda.Parks@ventura.org](mailto:Linda.Parks@ventura.org)>; Huber, Bob

<[Bob.Huber@ventura.org](mailto:Bob.Huber@ventura.org)>; Zaragoza, John

<[John.Zaragoza@ventura.org](mailto:John.Zaragoza@ventura.org)>; Long, Kelly

<[Kelly.Long@ventura.org](mailto:Kelly.Long@ventura.org)>; Levin, Robert

<[Robert.Levin@ventura.org](mailto:Robert.Levin@ventura.org)>; Powers, Michael

<[Michael.Powers@ventura.org](mailto:Michael.Powers@ventura.org)>

**Cc:** Citizens Journal <[editor@citizensjournal.us](mailto:editor@citizensjournal.us)>;

[hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us](mailto:hernandez.mike@citizensjournal.us)

**Subject:** To VC: What is really going on with COVID-19

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**VC Supervisors, CEO and Health Officer:**  
**Please read the linked letter to you, published in Citizens Journal on the COVID-19 situation. We hope and pray that it will influence your actions to get VC back on the right track .....**

**[What is really going on with COVID-19](#)**



To: Ventura County Board of Supervisors Steve Bennett, Linda Parks, Bob Huber, John Zaragoza and Kelly Long, CEO Mike Powers and Health Officer Dr. Robert Levin From George Miller & Debra Tash Following the so-called "Mainstream Media" (MSM) narrative on COVID-19 might cause one to think that we are in the midst of [...]

*October 23, 2020*

**Regards,**

**George Miller**  
**[Publisher@CitizensJournal.us](mailto:Publisher@CitizensJournal.us)**  
**Debra Tash**  
**[Editor@CitizensJournal.us](mailto:Editor@CitizensJournal.us)**

cid:image001.jpg@01D6AA2E.6C79FDC0



TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: November 10 Legacy Permit Amendments

Honorable Supervisors,

I urge you to reject the amendments to the coastal and non-coastal zoning ordinances before you today. The proposed amendments will hurt my job and the industry that affords me the opportunity to live and work in Ventura County. Oil and gas employees and contractors work every day to ensure our community and state at large has a safe, affordable and reliable energy supply.

The move to require discretionary review of legacy CUPs is part of a concerted effort by some Board members to shut down all oil and natural gas operations in Ventura County and with it thousands of jobs and lost tax revenue.

Proponents of such shutdowns often claim that job losses in the oil and natural gas industry are acceptable because oil and gas workers can simply find jobs in green energy. The truth is that green jobs in California pay less than oil and gas jobs, and a great majority of green energy infrastructure is produced out of state. According to a recent report released by the State Building and Construction Trades Council, green jobs in Ventura County, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, paid on average 35 percent less than oil and gas jobs. A forced career change to a job that pays less is simply not acceptable.

Our companies operate under the strictest environmental regulations in the world. We all share a commitment to clean air and water in our community. Responsible oil and gas production must be part of the equation for affordable, reliable and equitable energy policies.

Please support our local workforce, local economy, and the energy needs of today. I urge you to reject this radical and unnecessary policy change.

Mike Behrendt

Aera Energy

Construction Specialist

93003

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
SUBJECT: November 10 Legacy Permit Amendments

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(Tanner Ottaway P.E., Engineer at Aera Energy LLC, 93314 & 93001)



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Joe Lee, Aera Energy LLC, Production Operator, 93001

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
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Name: *John Marquer*

Company: *TIC*

Job Title: *GF*

Years in the Oil & Gas Industry: *15*

Zip Code: *93033*

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
SUBJECT: November 10 Legacy Permit Amendments

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Name: MARIO NAVARRO

Company: ETC

Job Title: CRANE OP

Years in the Oil & Gas Industry: 10 year

Zip Code: 93041

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
SUBJECT: November 10 Legacy Permit Amendments

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Name: *Ray Luna*

Company: *TIC*

Job Title: *crane*

Years in the Oil & Gas Industry: *30*

Zip Code: *93030*

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
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Name: Vicente Medrano

Company: The Industrial Company (T.I.C)

Job Title: General Foreman

Years in the Oil & Gas Industry: 10 years

Zip Code: 93030



November 10, 2020

Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009  
Sent via e-mail: 11/02/2020

Re: Reject zoning ordinance amendments for legacy oil and gas permits

Dear Board Members,

Our region's local energy production workforce is once again under direct attack by your Board. Our workforce is made up of grandparents, single parents, union members, second chancers, immigrants and veterans who provide a safe, affordable and reliable energy supply to support the vast energy needs of our community. This critical and essential work allows oil and natural gas employees and contractors to provide for their families and engage with our community by volunteering, mentoring our youth, and providing financial support to important non-profit organizations. The oil and natural gas industry has one of the most diverse workforces in Ventura County and throughout the state. Yet the Ventura County Board of Supervisors is set on putting us out of work and destroying our livelihood.

The Board's latest proposal to amend the coastal and non-coastal zoning ordinances to require additional review and approvals for conditional use permits is another attempt at shutting down our industry. Subjecting conditional use permits to additional layers of regulatory approval by the Board of Supervisors adds unnecessary time, costs, and red tape to an oversight system that works. Ultimately over time, these new requirements combined with the extreme and out of touch restrictions in the 2040 General Plan will cost our region thousands of jobs. In addition, the industry is responsible for tens of millions of dollars in County revenues. The revenues provided by local oil and natural gas producers support critical County programs like social services, education and public safety.

California produces only 28% of the oil and gas needed to meet current energy demands each day. In fact, California is the fourth largest consumer of oil and natural gas in the global economy. Any oil that is not produced in the state of California is imported from foreign countries that do not share our same commitment to environmental stewardship and social justice. It also makes us more dependent on those countries for the energy we need which makes us "energy insecure" and more vulnerable to global disruptions.



There is no difference between the allowable processes of legacy permits and discretionary permits per oil and natural gas production in Ventura County. All operations are strictly regulated by over 25 federal, state and local regulatory agencies. These agencies oversee planning, permitting and production of all oil and natural gas projects and facilities, including legacy permits, and provide 24/7 monitoring of extraction protocols to protect human health and the environment in Ventura County.

Oil and gas production is an integrated process. Operations do not rely on fixed buildings and infrastructure like other industries. Wells and facilities, as critical components of the integrated oil and gas production process, need to be located, re-located, re-drilled, and deepened from time to time over the course of many years in order to maintain levels of production. The Zoning Ordinance amendments will eliminate the ability to relocate, re-drill, and deepen existing wells and add more technologically advanced facilities. These unnecessary amendments will effectively shut down the industry.

California needs a regulatory system that allows oil and natural gas producers to operate in order to meet the state's energy needs. The operators, in fact, support good regulations that oversee their work. But adding additional layers with a goal of bogging down the process or ultimately obliterating an essential industry is unacceptable.

Attached with this letter are additional supporting documents that further highlight why amendments to the zoning ordinances are unwise, ill-chosen and untimely.

- Infographic: The Integrated Process of Oil & Natural Gas Production
- Fiscal Memo: Fiscal Contributions by Local Industry
- A Snapshot: One Ventura County Oil and Gas Producer's Mineral Interests
- Infographic: Activists False Claims About USGS Report
- Measure Z Infographic on Costly Lawsuits and Preemption
- United Latinos Vote – An Open Letter to the Sierra Club
- Assemblymember Jim Cooper - Environmental Racism and Lack of Diversity
- Sacramento Bee: California wants to wind down its gas and oil industry. What does it mean for jobs?

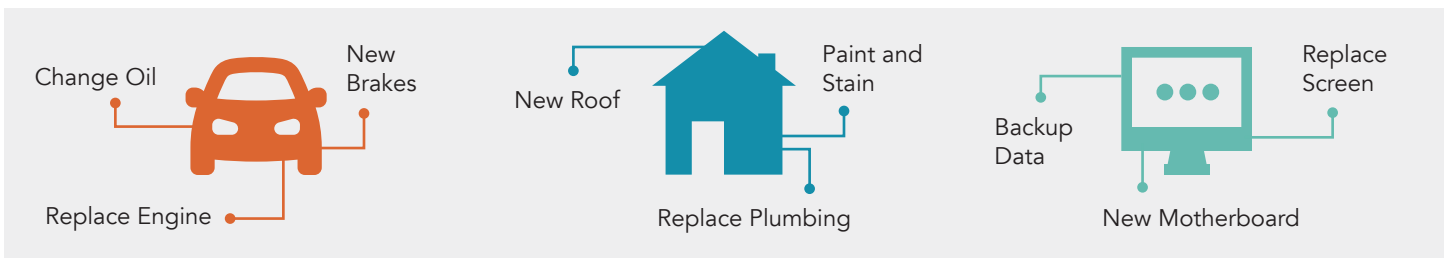
We urge you to reject the zoning ordinance amendments that harm jobs for working families.

Thank you.

# OIL AND GAS PERMITTING AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING ORDINANCES WILL SHUT DOWN LOCAL OIL AND GAS PRODUCTION

The Ventura County Board of Supervisors is considering amendments to the coastal and non-coastal zoning ordinances that will **shut down local oil and natural gas production** by eliminating administrative approval of maintenance that allow for the viability of integrated oil and gas operations. **Production maintenance efforts such as re-drilling, relocating, and deepening of wells are necessary activities to ensure petroleum resources remain accessible.**

**Just as it is necessary to conduct maintenance activities on your car, home and technology to keep them functioning and useful,**



**Oil and gas operations require production maintenance activities to sustain the integrated process.**



**By eliminating the ability for oil and natural gas operators to conduct production maintenance activities, wells will naturally decline as the oil and gas reservoir in a given area becomes depleted and the well becomes non-productive.**



Oil and gas operations do not rely on fixed buildings and infrastructure like other industries such as manufacturing.

The proposed zoning amendments are another attempt to shut down an industry that provides:

- 2,100 Jobs
- \$56M in Tax Revenues

In Ventura County we produce the most affordable and environmentally safe oil and gas. In fact, more than 25 local, state and federal agencies oversee oil and gas operations.

VENTURA CITIZENS FOR  
**ENERGY**  
INDEPENDENCE





# Economic & Fiscal Impact of the Oil & Gas Industry in Ventura County

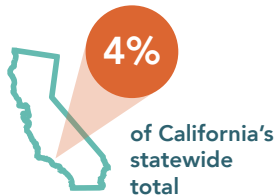
The oil and gas industry has been operating in Ventura County for over 100 years. It has been, and continues to be, a positive force in Ventura, impacting the region's economy and state and local revenues. This reflects the enormous value of oil and gas reserves, the high wage payments in the industry, and the large amount of purchases made by oil producers from other local businesses.

## ECONOMIC OUTPUT



Oil and gas production in Ventura County:

**7.7 MILLION BARRELS** in 2016



IN 2018, THE OIL AND GAS EXTRACTION INDUSTRY IN THE COUNTY WILL ACCOUNT FOR:



**\$760 MILLION**  
in economic output



**\$180 MILLION**  
in labor income



**OVER \$50 MILLION**  
in royalty and lease payments to mineral rights owners

THE INDUSTRY IS CURRENTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR:



**\$56 MILLION**  
in state and local taxes and fees



**\$21 MILLION**  
goes to local jurisdictions within Ventura County supporting:



Schools



Fire



Police

## EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES



**900 WORKERS**  
Directly employed



**\$115,000**  
Average industry salary  
**2X**  
average pay in the private sector

Direct and indirect employment is expected to increase from  
**2,100 to over 3,000**  
jobs in 2023



**1 JOB** in the oil and gas industry =  
**1.4 JOBS** elsewhere

## A BAN ON PRODUCTION

ACTIVIST GROUPS WANT TO SHUT DOWN PRODUCTION. A BAN WILL HAVE SIGNIFICANT CONSEQUENCES, SUCH AS:



Over **3,000** local workers and families would be threatened with **job losses**.



Reducing the **local economic activity** by  
**\$1 BILLION**.



Reducing **county tax revenue** by  
**\$50 MILLION** – used to support fire and police.

### IMPACTS ABILITY TO PAY FOR PENSIONS:

All ten cities located in Ventura County are members of CalPERS which faces a major unfunded liability. Based on CalPERS' most recent actuarial projections, **annual pension contributions for the 10 cities combined will increase by over \$15 million between 2017-18 and 2022-23.**



## CALIFORNIANS FOR ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Californians for Energy Independence is a coalition that supports state and local policies that allow for continued domestic energy production and opposes those policies – such as oil taxes and energy bans – that would hinder production and increase reliance on foreign oil. For more information, visit: [www.EnergyIndependenceCA.com](http://www.EnergyIndependenceCA.com)

## A Snapshot: One Ventura County Oil and Gas Producer's Mineral Interests

Mineral interests held by Ventura County residents – 791 royalty owners

Ventura County residents who hold mineral interests elsewhere – 146 royalty owners

Ventura County mineral interest holders, non-producing – 148 royalty owners

**Total - 1,085 royalty owners**

*\*Data represents one Ventura County company's royalty information. There are thousands of royalty owners across many local oil and natural gas producers in Ventura County.*



## ACTIVISTS INCORRECTLY CLAIM THERE IS EVIDENCE OF GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION FROM OIL AND GAS WELLS IN THE OXNARD OIL FIELD

### VENTURA COUNTY WATER SUPPLIES ARE SAFE

On February 25, 2019, the California State Water Resources Control Board held a stakeholder meeting to present ongoing results of its Regional Groundwater Monitoring Program in the Oxnard coastal plain. The Regional Monitoring Program is conducted in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey to meet requirements of CA Senate Bill 4 related to oil and gas production.

The presentation on the Regional Monitoring Program in the Oxnard coastal plain was made by Celia Rosecrans of the U.S. Geological Survey.

#### Here's what the USGS Regional Monitoring Program study concluded:

- No mixing of oil field water with overlying groundwater.
- In three of the 14 wells tested, naturally occurring microbial methane and thermogenic methane associated with oil deposits were detected.
- Thermogenic gases may result from gas movement along preferential pathways such as wells or from natural migration up through the formation
- In the Pleasant Valley area, east of the Oxnard oil field, deep formation brine signatures were detected in 2017 similar to historical data; these detections are a result of groundwater overdevelopment rather than oil-field activities
- Results in the Pleasant Valley area are consistent with findings in previous studies that show that detections of these brine-related constituents are related to groundwater supply wells being placed close to naturally occurring hydrocarbon-bearing formations and are not due to oil and gas production activities.
- Other factors that may affect groundwater quality surrounding the Oxnard oil field include managed aquifer recharge to the north, seawater intrusion from the southwest, agricultural return flow, and upward movement of deep formation brines in response to groundwater development

Sources: Rosecrans, Celia Z., Landon, Matthew K., and McMahon, Peter B., 2019, Groundwater quality results from the Regional Monitoring Program study of the Oxnard Oil Field, presented at California State Water Resources Control Board Stakeholder Meeting, February 25, 2019, Sacramento, California. Public Testimony, Ventura County Board of Supervisors, April 23, 2019.

### FINAL USGS REPORT EXPECTED 2021

[according to USGS staff]



**"USGS concentrations in this study are below the threshold normally recommended by international, US federal and state regulatory bodies used to further investigate sources. It is safe and there is no threat to the water supply. Banning oil operations, either now or in the future, will have absolutely no impact on either the presence or quantity of naturally occurring gas dissolved in usable aquifers at this location."**

Dr. Anthony Gorody,  
Geoscientist and internationally  
recognized subject matter  
expert

**"The results of our sampling found we had no evidence or no detections of petroleum hydrocarbons, inorganic constituents, or isotopes that indicate that we had oil field water mixing with the groundwater overlying the oil field."**

Celia Z. Rosecrans, USGS  
Geologist



# Judge Invalidates Monterey County's Measure Z

## Removes Ban on New Oil and Gas Wells and Produced Water Injection Sites

### Costs Monterey County Nearly \$1 Million in Legal Fees

#### Measure Z Ruled Invalid

In 2016, an activist group opposed to responsible oil and gas production placed an initiative on the November 2016 Monterey County ballot, Measure Z, to shut down local oil and gas production. Proponents of the measure touted it as a fracking ban (not a production ban), but failed to disclose to voters that no fracking takes place in Monterey County due to its geology. Many voters were also unaware of the language in Measure Z which aimed to shut down production by banning new oil and gas wells and produced water injection sites. This confusion led to voters approving a fracking ban in name only and jeopardizing nearly \$300 million in economic activity that helps fund schools, fire protection and other vital services.

After Measure Z's passage, oil and gas companies and royalty owners filed lawsuits challenging the validity of the measure. The lawsuits alleged Measure Z was misleading, harmful and that regulation of oil and gas production should be done at the state and federal level, not at the county level.

A Monterey County Superior Court judge applied the law and struck down the ban on drilling and produced water injection. The decision on banning hydraulic fracturing was deferred since the process is not taking place in the county. Today, oil and gas operations continue in the county.

#### Measure Z Costly to County

The County faced millions in legal fees to defend Measure Z. The County ultimately settled citing a \$36 million budget deficit.

#### MEASURE Z TIMELINE:

**November 2016**  
Voters approve Measure Z

Hundreds of millions in funding for schools, fire protection and public safety at risk

**June 2017**  
Monterey County Superior Court Judge consolidates lawsuits into one trial

**January 2018**  
Measure Z Costly to Monterey County

Monterey County Counsel indicates the County's defense of Measure Z has cost nearly \$1 million. So far, \$4 million has been earmarked by the county to defend Measure Z.<sup>2</sup>

**March 2018**  
Protect Monterey County and Center for Biological Diversity file appeal to overturn the Monterey County Superior Court's Decision

**May 2018**  
Monterey County Cuts Deal: Will Not Appeal Measure Z Ruling

**December 2016**  
Local oil and gas companies and royalty owners begin filing a total of six lawsuits challenging Measure Z

**December 2017**  
Monterey County Superior Court Judge issues "intended decision"<sup>1</sup>

#### Monterey County **The Herald**

12/29/17: Monterey County Superior Court Judge Thomas Wills issued an "intended decision" on Measure Z, the voter-approved initiative that banned fracking, new oil wells and would phase out wastewater injection wells.

The decision said that Measure Z's bans on drilling new wells and wastewater injection are **preempted and invalid by existing state and federal regulations.**



5/16/18: The County will avoid the potential for millions of dollars in attorney fees and costs, potentially tens of millions of dollars. The pressure of the County's \$36 million budget deficit next fiscal year, and more in the following fiscal year, contributed to the Board's decision.<sup>3</sup>

CALIFORNIANS FOR  
**ENERGY**  
INDEPENDENCE

Californians for Energy Independence is a coalition that supports state and local policies that allow for continued domestic energy production and opposes those policies – such as oil taxes and energy bans – that would hinder production and increase reliance on foreign oil. For more information, visit: [www.EnergyIndependenceCA.com](http://www.EnergyIndependenceCA.com)

1. <https://htv-prod-media.s3.amazonaws.com/files/measure-z-court-decision-1514581082.pdf>

2. <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=23555>

3. <https://www.ksbw.com/article/measure-z-fracking-battle-continues-in-monterey-county/21349345>

# An Open Letter to the Sierra Club

September 24, 2020

Dear Sierra Club,

Your advertisement "Open Letter to the People of California" (Sept 18, 2020, in the Los Angeles Times) felt offensive and manipulative. The goals are admirable – in fact, they are already embodied in California law and policy. But the path you want the Governor to take could hurt the real people and the communities we represent.

## Your world is not our world.

We are from rural and urban communities, with our livelihoods being in agriculture, small businesses, and personal services. We keep the "real" economic engine running and risk our health and lives during this pandemic. We are people who make tough daily choices about how to drive to work, feed our kids, share a video screen for school, and take our parents to the doctor. All these things are hard. Your world would make them only harder.

Let's be particular on your five actions:

- 1 You want to phase out our "polluting" cars, the ones we drive to work and take our kids to the park in. It would require us to write hefty checks for those expensive EVs you like so much, and then pay higher energy bill so we can afford to drive them.
- 2 You want to phase out our "dirty" stoves, water heaters and furnaces. Here again, it would require us, or our landlords, to make investments we can't afford so our residences can be rewired for these new HVACs and appliances. We are committed to making homes more affordable so Californians can own their homes, not take them farther out of reach. We don't understand how this works.

3 Your ideas could allow our rich neighbors in the next town to charge their Teslas and run their air conditioners on hot days, but make it unaffordable to use ours. Your plan sounds like you want us to foot the energy bill for the "green" buildings where you rent office space, while our little businesses go broke with higher energy costs?

4 Let's not wink and nod here: **You know perfectly well** that the tens of millions of drivers in California who drove HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS of miles in 2018 – mostly just to get to work – are not able to suddenly stop driving. So, we're instead going to IMPORT all that fuel from Iran, Iraq, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Russia? And transfer our high-wage energy jobs overseas, while more Californians become unemployed? And that's more humane and "equitable"?

5 When your funders from San Francisco and Hollywood call, your "strong climate leaders" pick up the phone. When we call, we are encouraged to "talk to our legislator." We know the drill. It seems to us like those with lifestyles only a few can afford are more important than people who work hard, pay taxes, build small businesses, school their children, and make hard choices about whether their kids can afford to go to college.

Your world is not our world. Yours feels hypocritical and socially divisive and would disproportionately burden those who you claim to support the most – low-income and ethnic minority populations.

We are advocates for sensible, fact-based, and equitable energy policies. We come to the discussion in good faith with ideas to help ALL Californians. We hope you will join us with ideas that help ALL Californians as well.

## We are advocates for sensible, fact-based, equitable energy policies.





STATE CAPITOL  
P.O. BOX 942849  
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FAX (916) 319-2109

DISTRICT OFFICE  
9250 LAGUNA SPRINGS DRIVE, SUITE 220  
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# Assembly California Legislature



**JIM COOPER**

CHAIR: BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 4 ON STATE ADMINISTRATION  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, NINTH DISTRICT

**COMMITTEES**  
BUDGET  
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION  
INSURANCE  
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, RETIREMENT, AND  
SOCIAL SECURITY

**SELECT COMMITTEES**  
CHAIR: COMMUNITY AND LAW  
ENFORCEMENT RELATIONS AND  
RESPONSIBILITIES

August 3, 2020

An Open Letter to Environmental Organizations

## **RE: Environmental Racism and Lack of Diversity**

Dear Environmental Organization Leaders:

Recently, the Sierra Club's Executive Director apologized for its "substantial role in perpetuating white supremacy" and committed to change including investing \$5 million of their budget into initiatives to diversify their staff and to focus on environmental and racial justice efforts.

I commend the organization for apologizing and for pledging money to address their internal issues. That being said, I have to ask why it took the murder of an unarmed Black man, nationwide civil unrest and protests? The Sierra Club and other environmental groups including the California League of Conservation Voters (CLCV), National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and Environment California have long had all White (or mostly) leadership teams. These organizations consistently push legislation that is designed to "protect or improve the environment" but frequently, when implemented, negatively impact disadvantaged communities and low-wage inland households. These organizations from their leadership to their funders, are nearly all white and attempt to trade on race issues by branding their efforts as: "environmental justice" – for which they do not apologize.

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) reports that California residential electric power rates are 55.8% higher than the average of other states. The report also states that California motorists are paying the nation's second highest gasoline prices, 98 cents a gallon (47.3% higher) more than the average of the 49 other states.

These higher costs impact disadvantaged communities, especially those who live in areas like the Central Valley, and force them to pay more for energy costs than coastal community households do. These disadvantaged communities throughout the state are mostly comprised of Black and Brown people. Residents in these communities commute longer distances to work and use more electricity due to the hotter climates. They do not drive electric vehicles (EV's), they drive older vehicles that, are often not fuel efficient. These impacts leads them to spend more of their monthly income on utility and transportation costs than the rest of the state. Thus, these new policies hurt the very people these environmental organizations claim to care about the most.

For years, I have introduced legislation to cap income limits for EV rebates and attempted to fix these flawed environmental EV policies so that they benefit those who need help the most. However, coastal elitists are still disproportionately reaping the benefits of California's environmental policies promoted by these organizations.



Printed on Recycled Paper

According to California's Clean Vehicle Rebate Project, one high median income Senate district received more than \$29 million in EV rebates, while six of California's poorest Senate districts combined received less than that one coastal district. These numbers demonstrate how these organizations, as well as the California Air Resources Board (CARB), which lacks diversity within the board, lacks empathy for communities of color when advancing their agendas which impact a handful of high income coastal communities. These efforts are making our social and economic equality issues far worse, not better and creating a wider divide between the haves and have-nots, exemplify environmental racism.

California has a goal of having 5 million EV's on the road by 2030, which resulting in a significant reliance on the production of cobalt batteries. Although environmental groups claim that cobalt-rich batteries (used to power EVs), are "green," they are produced at an exceptional human cost. Today, 60 percent of the world's cobalt originates from Congo – an impoverished country that is predominantly Black and holds a long history of violating the most basic rights of humans. Considering this fact, how can we, as the leading progressive voice in the United States, ignore this situation while continuing to proclaim and protest the lack of economic and racial justice improvements within Black and Brown communities here in California?

The Sierra Club Executive Director said "For far too long, organizations like the Sierra Club were complacent in a system where inequities prevailed. We won't reach our environmental goals unless all of us ... keep putting (equity, inclusion and justice) front and center." Addressing systematic racism should be at the top of their lists, because talking about the environment and environmental goals has long had the lion's share of attention for the past decade, while racism and inequality issues have rarely been acknowledged by these organizations.

The Sierra Club is correct, for too long organizations like theirs have been complacent in actively discussing and addressing environmental racism because promoting policies that benefit coastal Tesla drivers has been more important.

The California Legislature has continually supported and allowed these organizations to push policies, while ignoring the cost realities of working communities, in order to implement their environmental agenda. At the very least, it is time these organizations and the policy making arms like CARB, explain why they are promoting policies that systematically drive racial economic inequities and fuel environmental racism.

It is time to correct the hypocrisy that has driven their mission by hiring and appointing people of color from disadvantage communities to their boards to help create a more robust discussion about the realities of Black and Brown communities using the information from the voices that have far too often been left out. We can no longer continue to ignore the voices of those who need representation the most.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Cooper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jim" and last name "Cooper" clearly legible.

JIM COOPER

Assemblymember, District 9

# THE SACRAMENTO BEE

## CAPITOL ALERT

# California wants to wind down its gas and oil industry. What does it mean for jobs?

**BY JEONG PARK**

OCTOBER 01, 2020 05:00 AM

For tens of thousands of Californians, a job in the oil and gas industry has been a ticket to a middle-class life.

The work can be dangerous. It can be unhealthy. Still, the industry has been among the few willing to employ Californians without a college degree and pay them well above average.

But as the state seeks to wind down its gas and oil industry — made even clearer last week by Gov. Gavin Newsom's call to scale back fracking and [ban the sale of gas-powered cars](#) in the state by 2035 — those jobs are at risk.

“Can we immediately start talking about jobs? We can hate on oil, but the truth is our refinery jobs are really good middle class jobs,” Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez, D-San Diego, [tweeted Sept. 24](#) after Newsom's announcement. “Jobs can't be an afterthought to any climate change legislation.”

Even as the number of clean energy jobs rises in California, the quality of those positions vary wildly, from rooftop solar installers making just above minimum wage to those working in utilities making \$50 an hour. Environmental and labor advocates say it's up to the state to ensure those clean energy jobs are as good as the jobs in the oil and gas industry they will replace.

## MIDDLE-CLASS JOBS

The oil and gas industry directly employs 152,000 people in California, said Cathy Reheis-Boyd, president of the Western States Petroleum Association, which represents the industry in six western states, including California.

Those workers make \$80,500 a year on average. Nearly two-thirds of those workers don't have a bachelor's degree, according to [a 2019 report](#) from the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation.

“It's one of the few industries left in California for people who are not college graduates, or for second chancers who have a criminal record,” said Rock Zierman, CEO of the California Independent Petroleum Association.



The industry is among the biggest employer in Kern County, with tens of thousands hired to drill wells. But the oil and gas jobs are everywhere in California, from those in the refineries in the Bay Area to others building oil and gas pipelines.

Those jobs are just not comparable in quality to those in the green energy sector, Zierman argued.

“Those green energy jobs just don’t pay the way oil and gas industry pay,” Zierman said. “You have a higher pay and upward mobility in the oil and gas industry than in green jobs.”

## **CREATING GOOD GREEN JOBS**

The fear of job loss propelled the State Building and Construction Trades Council of California to oppose Assembly Bill 345, which would have prohibited oil drilling near schools and homes. The bill eventually died in committee in August.

“AB 345 risked killing jobs without any plan to avoid the inevitable economic harm that befalls the Central Valley,” Sen. Anna Caballero, D-Salinas, who voted against the bill, wrote in an [Aug. 24 Fresno Bee op-ed](#).

Ron Miller, executive secretary of Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council, said many of his 140,000 members already work in solar fields, windmills and other green energy facilities. The council has been working with environmentalists to achieve carbon neutrality in California by 2045, he said. But still, he said the gas and oil industry still employs thousands in the region.

Miller recalled Southern California’s manufacturing heydays — a car plant in South Gate 7 miles south of Los Angeles, tire manufacturers all over the region, a Boeing facility in Long Beach. Many of those places and industries have gone, but not the oil and gas industry.

“The oil and gas industry is one of the last large industry left here,” Miller said. “We can’t afford to push them out before their time.”

Unless workers in the gas and oil industry see a future for themselves in a low-carbon economy, their first priority is to “save their own livelihoods,” said Carol Zabin, director of Green Energy Program at UC Berkeley Labor Center. For the state to truly achieve its goals fighting climate change, Zabin said, it needs to invest in helping its gas and oil workforce transition.

“Union members are fed this line that there are more jobs in the clean energy economy, and you can get a job as a solar installer,” Zabin said. “And they are going, ‘We know those are pretty crappy jobs.’”

In her [report](#) released earlier this year, Zabin said the state should go beyond offering workers a few thousand dollars and having them navigate through a complex job market. The state should offer apprenticeship and training programs through institutions such as community colleges and secure commitment from employers that the programs’ graduates will be placed in a good job, she said.

Zabin also said the state and its counties and cities can mandate certain workplace conditions through a project labor agreement. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, for instance, signed an agreement with BYD Motors for [all-electric buses in 2013](#) that stipulated those buses need to be assembled locally.

Zabin said [Assembly Bill 841](#) in the Legislature this year is another example: Those building an electric vehicle charging infrastructure funded or authorized by the state must have at least one electrician who holds a certain certification.

“There’s a set of policy tools to encourage good employers and screen out bad employers” she said.

## **“WE SHOULDN’T BE FORCED TO BARGAIN”**

Katie Valenzuela grew up in Oildale in Kern County, a community whose logo has two oil wells, and where people leaving high schools had three options.

“You go to college, you work for oil, or you work in healthcare,” said Valenzuela, an environmental justice advocate and an incoming Sacramento City Councilwoman. “If you lose your job in oil, there isn’t another job, which makes them so dependent on oil.”

Those workers know what working in oil means — toxic fumes, fires and dangerous heavy tools, she said.

Still, “they are dependent on the oil industry because of the lack of investment,” Valenzuela said. “Someone created this problem, and it’s up to the state to deal with it.”

Kern County has seen some green energy jobs as companies build solar and wind farms. But California needs to deliberately invest in creating green energy workforce in places like Kern County, through creating strategies specific to each of the state’s regions and being very intentional about which programs the state will fund, she said.

The oil workers in her hometown, she said, can’t simply be left behind.

“I know the minute there are good jobs available in another sector, those workers will want those jobs,” she said. “They want jobs that don’t pollute their community if they are available. But they are not. And until we crack that code, we will never be able to move forward on any of those goals” on climate change.

##

TO: Ventura County Board of Supervisors  
VIA EMAIL TO: [ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org](mailto:ClerkoftheBoard@ventura.org)  
SUBJECT: November 10 Legacy Permit Amendments

Honorable Supervisors,

I urge you to reject the amendments to the coastal and non-coastal zoning ordinances before you today. The proposed amendments will hurt my job and the industry that affords me the opportunity to live and work in Ventura County. Oil and gas employees and contractors work every day to ensure our community and state at large has a safe, affordable and reliable energy supply.

The move to require discretionary review of legacy CUPs is part of a concerted effort by some Board members to shut down all oil and natural gas operations in Ventura County and with it thousands of jobs and lost tax revenue.

Proponents of such shutdowns often claim that job losses in the oil and natural gas industry are acceptable because oil and gas workers can simply find jobs in green energy. The truth is that green jobs in California pay less than oil and gas jobs, and a great majority of green energy infrastructure is produced out of state. According to a recent report released by the State Building and Construction Trades Council, green jobs in Ventura County, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, paid on average 35 percent less than oil and gas jobs. A forced career change to a job that pays less is simply not acceptable.

Our companies operate under the strictest environmental regulations in the world. We all share a commitment to clean air and water in our community. Responsible oil and gas production must be part of the equation for affordable, reliable and equitable energy policies.

Please support our local workforce, local economy, and the energy needs of today. I urge you to reject this radical and unnecessary policy change.

Brian Lane, Aera Energy / Health and Safety Specialist, 93003

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Mark Griffin, Compliance Assurance Specialist  
Aera Energy  
93004