



Re: Agenda Item 47 November 10, 2020 Board of Supervisors

Honorable Supervisors,

I am submitting comment on behalf of the Ventura County Taxpayers Association. VCTA's mission is to inform taxpayers, promote the wise use of public funds, oppose waste, advise public officials regarding issues of concern to taxpayers and recommend positions that will best serve the taxpayers' interests. Thus, we are opposed to the proposed amendments to the coastal and non-coastal zoning ordinances.

The changes to the zoning ordinances are part of a coordinated attempt to shut down oil and gas production in Ventura County. The oil and gas industry is a major economic driving force for Ventura County, providing thousands of local jobs and \$760 million in economic output. More importantly, the industry is one of the largest taxpayers in Ventura County, providing \$50 million in state and local tax revenues that fund the vital public services our community depends on, like education and public safety. Putting a local industry out of business jeopardizes critical resources and funding the County needs to recover from the global pandemic.

Putting a local industry out of business jeopardizes critical revenue the County depends on. Doing so without a plan to replace that lost revenue is irresponsible.

Supervisors need to be transparent with taxpayers. How will you replace the lost revenue? Increase our taxes? Or, cut vital services? Or both?

Taxpayers are owed an answer.

We are particularly concerned this policy would also infringe on the vested rights of energy producers and thousands of mineral rights owners, leaving the County vulnerable to expensive lawsuits. Other local governments have tried to implement similar policies, only to be sued and overruled after courts found that such policies infringe on the vested rights of property owners. Given the negative fiscal and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is irresponsible for the County to move forward with yet another policy that it cannot afford right now.

We hope you take our views into consideration and reject this irresponsible proposal.

David Grau, President
Ventura County Taxpayers Association