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February 27th, 2023

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

800 S. Victoria Avenue

Ventura, CA 93009

RE: Agenda Item #72

Dear Ventura County Board of Supervisors:

CAUSE stands in solidarity with CFROG and Lemonwood community members and urge the Board of Supervisors to **deny ABA Energy Corporation's appeal** based on the failure to comply with legal requirements and the Planning Division's erroneous issuance of the Zoning Clearances in violation of County law.

CAUSE is a base-building organization with deep roots in the City of Oxnard. CAUSE has worked with Oxnard residents to organize around social, economic, and environmental justice issues for over two decades. We have advocated to protect communities from the environmental hazards of liquified gas terminals, power plants, and metal scrapyards. For years, CAUSE has collaborated with residents of South Oxnard working towards a vision to deindustrialize the Oxnard coast, open access to Ormond Beach and advocate for clean, healthy, and prosperous communities.

Lemonwood is a South Oxnard neighborhood that is uniquely impacted by the effects of environmental degradation. Lemonwood's residents are exposed to pollution by highways, abandoned oil wells and pesticides from the surrounding farmlands. According to the CalEnviroScreen, the Lemonwood community already experiences a pollution burden 77 to 93 percent higher than other California communities; higher than any other community in Ventura County. Lemonwood's residents are mainly working-class Latinx families who experience a poverty rate 64 to 90 percent higher than the rest of the state. Thus, the proposed ABA expansion is not only a land-use issue, but unequivocally, an environmental justice issue.

Allowing drilling expansions:

1. **Using 1957 permits with no environmental review;**
2. **In a predominantly Latinx neighborhood already significantly impacted by pollution as defined by the State of California;**
3. **Next to an elementary school where the majority of the students are students of color;**
4. **Next to farmworkers who work near these wells and are exposed to additional air and water pollution;**



**5. With no additional opportunity for public input- especially when there is a high percentage of non-English speaking residents and no proper outreach from the appealing party;
Is environmental racism.**

We support the Ventura County Planning Commission's decision to deny these oil and gas wells from being re-drilled in December 2022. **The Planning Commission's decision reflects the need to ensure that all health and safety reviews and requirements have been addressed and impacts on the surrounding homes and schools analyzed.** We believe these are prudent measures the Board of Supervisors should also take into account and not ignore.

In Community,

Lucas Zucker
Co-Executive Director