

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISORS

Phillip Peters District 1
Chris Parlier..... District 2
Jeff Flores..... District 3
David Couch District 4
Leticia Perez District 5



KATHLEEN KRAUSE
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue, 5th Floor
Bakersfield, California 93301
Telephone (661) 868-3585
TTY Relay 800-735-2929

August 12, 2025

The Honorable Cottie Petrie-Norris
Chair, Assembly Committee on Utilities and Energy
1020 N Street, Room 408A
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Lori D. Wilson
Chair, Assembly Committee on Transportation
1020 N Street, Suite 112
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for Legislation to Advance Kern County's Oil and Gas Permitting Ordinance and Environmental Review

Dear Assembly Member Petrie-Norris and Assembly Member Wilson,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for Governor Newsom's proposed legislation to stabilize California's transportation fuel market for in-state supply and ensure an affordable, reliable energy supply for all Californians.

The proposed legislative changes would implement a key recommendation from Vice Chair Siva Gunda of the California Energy Commission's Petroleum Market Task Force by addressing long-standing delays in oil permitting. It affirms the legal sufficiency of Kern County's Oil and Gas Zoning Ordinance (Title 19, 2025-A) and its certified Final Second Supplemental Recirculated Environmental Impact Report (FSSREIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The ordinance contains more than 100 mitigation measures to protect air quality, water, public health, and habitat and respects State Law under SB 1137 (Gonzalez, 2022) for the Health Protection Zones (HPZ).

The legislation would also provide Kern County and the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) with the regulatory certainty to issue permits without further delay or risk of litigation. It does not exempt Kern County from CEQA; rather, it ensures that our existing, court-tested environmental analysis is honored. The bill prevents ongoing legal challenges to a document that has been developed through 12 years of public process and 10 years of judicial review.

Kern County remains central to California's energy future:

- Producing 80% of California's oil
- Hosting 70% of the state's wind and solar infrastructure
- Supporting 80% of in-state battery storage capacity

Over the past 15 years, Kern has attracted \$89 billion in private energy investment by balancing clean energy leadership with stable, locally managed permitting. This proposed legislation will allow Kern to continue this work by supporting in-state oil production while meeting the highest environmental standards.

We urge your support for this fundamental component of the overall energy strategy as it is vital to protecting consumers, advancing the state's energy goals, and ensuring investor confidence in California's energy sector. Kern County is ready to lead with both environmental responsibility and energy reliability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Leticia Perez', with a stylized, cursive script.

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor of California
Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Utilities and Energy
Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Transportation
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California Energy Commission
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange