

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 10, 2025

MEDIA CONTACT:

Erin Briscoe-Clarke
Chief Communications Officer
(661) 868-3173
briscoee@kerncounty.com

Kern County Supports SB 237 – Oil, Gas, and Fuel Market Stabilization

Bakersfield, CA — Kern County today announced strong support for SB 237 (Grayson), which proposes to stabilize California’s transportation fuel market and ensure an affordable, reliable energy supply for all Californians. The legislation would allow Kern’s oil permitting ordinance to move forward immediately, supporting in-state oil production while upholding the state’s highest environmental standards.

“Kern County is committed to being part of the solution,” said Board of Supervisors Chair Leticia Perez. “Our community and our energy industry play a vital role in meeting California’s needs. As long as petroleum remains part of the equation, producing it responsibly here at home helps protect local jobs while keeping fuel stable and affordable for the families who depend on it.”

The bill would implement a key recommendation from 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 Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (FSSREIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This ordinance includes more than 100 mitigation measures to protect air quality, water, public health, and habitat.

Under the proposed legislation, Kern County will continue using its comprehensive environmental review process and would not seek exemptions or waivers. The bill simply prevents ongoing legal challenges to a document already vetted and certified through public process and court review.

“This bill provides Kern County and CalGEM with the clarity we need to move forward on permit approvals without additional delays or lawsuits,” said Craig Murphy, Interim Director of the Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department. “It does not remove the County’s obligations under CEQA. Instead, it affirms that our previously completed environmental analysis meets the highest standards and remains fully enforceable.”

– more –

Kern County remains a cornerstone of 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 bill represents a critical step in supporting investor confidence, protecting consumers, and advancing the county's energy prowess. Kern is proud to lead with both environmental responsibility and energy reliability.

###