

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 23, 2019

The Honorable David Bernhardt
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Bernhardt:

As Members of the California Congressional Delegation, we write in strong opposition to recent actions taken by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) that will make over 2 million acres of land in California available to new oil and gas development. We urge you to immediately reconsider these proposals that expose the state and its citizens to unacceptable risks associated with oil and gas development, and that fly in the face of the public's desire to protect underground sources of drinking water, mitigate climate change, and safeguard public resources for future generations.

In the span of two weeks the administration announced plans to open over 2 million acres of public and private land to new oil and gas drilling in 18 Counties in California, including Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Monterey, San Benito, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Ventura. These proposed sites are near residential areas, agricultural farm land, fragile drinking water aquifers, as well as protected areas including Sequoia, Kings Canyon, and Yosemite National Parks.

BLM estimates that over 90 percent of new oil and gas wells on public land use hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking", in conjunction with other destructive extraction techniques as part of the oil and gas development process. For each well, millions of gallons of water are mixed with toxic chemicals, many of which are not publicly disclosed, and injected under high pressure into the well, fracturing the rock and releasing oil and gas. Following the frack, produced water, which is highly salinized water that naturally exists underground alongside oil and gas, flows to the surface where it is collected and stored. Produced water can spill during transport or storage, contaminating groundwater and polluting agricultural lands. Underground injection of produced water is also known to cause earthquakes in numerous regions, an additional risk in a state as seismically active as California.

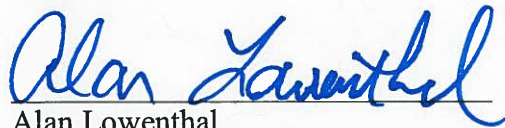
Of the counties that BLM seeks to open to new oil and gas leasing, Alameda, Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties have all banned fracking or new oil and gas development. It is clear that the administration is moving forward without fully considering the risks and damages to public health and the environment or the will of the people of the state. At a time when California is taking steps to address the climate crisis by electrifying its transportation sector and transitioning to a 100% clean and renewable energy grid, it is inexcusable that the administration would

aggressively and unilaterally seek to open over 2 million acres of land to new oil and gas development.

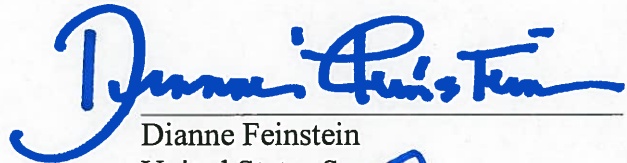
With U.S. oil production already at an all-time high, we should not be increasing fossil fuel production on these California public lands. Of the federal lands currently leased for oil and gas, more than half are not producing. Once these lands are leased for oil and gas, it blocks them from being used for more sustainable and necessary purposes such as recreation or renewable energy production.

The administration has not adequately measured the public health and environmental impacts of this decision but instead has steamrolled through the process to advance the administration's narrow goal of catering to the oil and gas industry. We stand with our constituents in opposition to BLM's plans to open federal lands in California to new oil and gas development.

Sincerely,



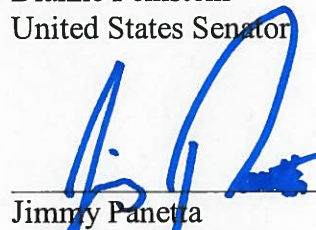
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



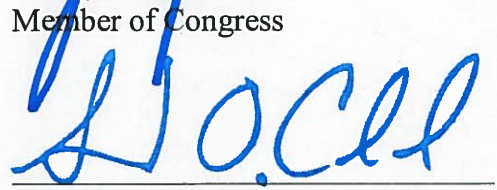
Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



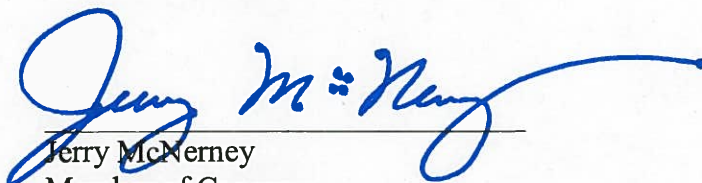
Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



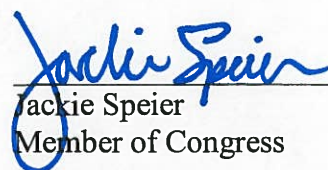
Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



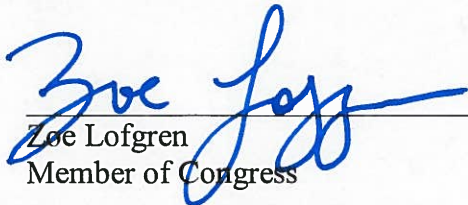
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

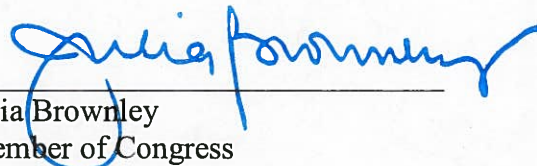


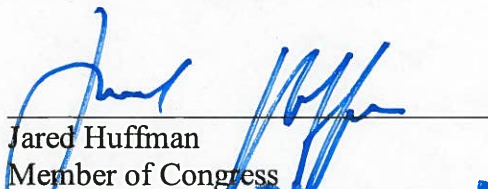
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

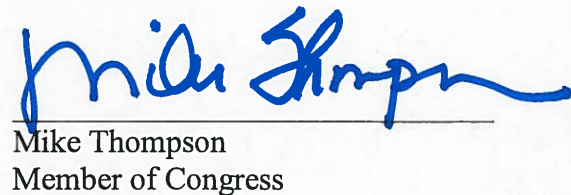


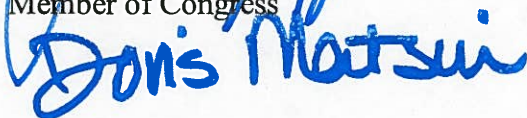
Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress


Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress


Julia Brownley
Member of Congress


Jared Huffman
Member of Congress


Mike Thompson
Member of Congress


Doris Matsui
Member of Congress


Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

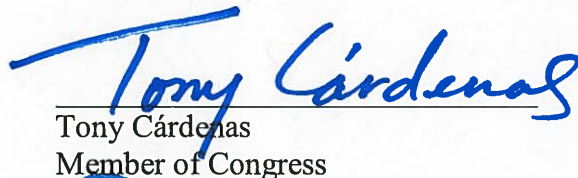
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

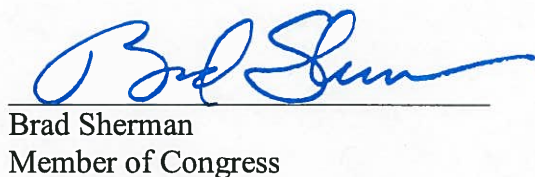

Katie Hill
Member of Congress

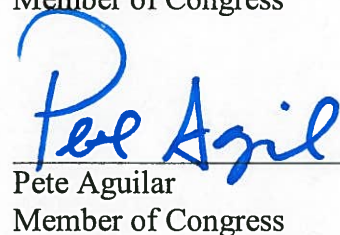

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

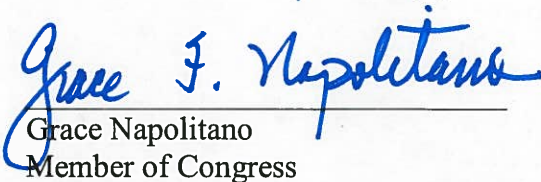
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Member of Congress

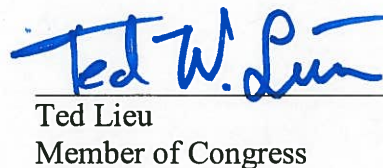

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

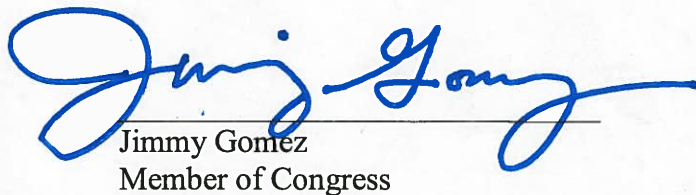

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

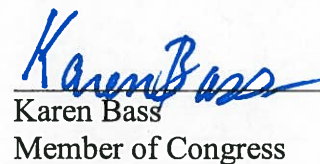

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

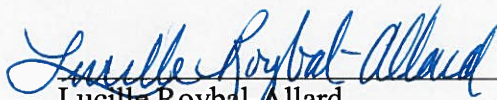

Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress


Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress


Ted Lieu
Member of Congress


Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress


Karen Bass
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



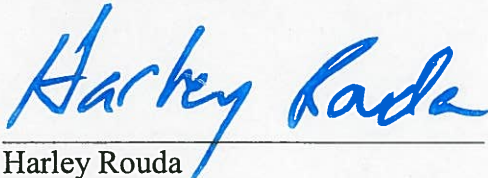
Mark Takano
Member of Congress



Nanette Barragán
Member of Congress



Katie Porter
Member of Congress



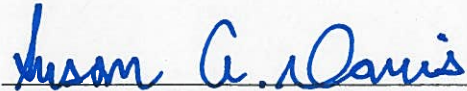
Harley Rouda
Member of Congress



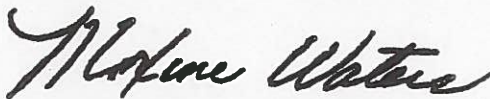
Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress