

Google Groups

Re: Please submit attached letter to Council File #17-0447

Zina Cheng

Jun 12, 2017 4:13 PM

Posted in group: **Clerk-PLUM-Committee**

Please be aware that the another appropriate email address for your written response is
clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org
For your convenience, I have included the correct email address for you.

The Office of the City Clerk is in receipt of your comment. It is included in the public record.

NOTE TO LA CITY STAFF

Please Cc sharon.dickinson@lacity.org on all emails related to PLUM Committee.

Zina Cheng
Deputy City Clerk/Legislative Assistant for:
Energy and Environment Committee
Health, Mental Health, and Education Committee
Planning and Land Use Management Committee

City of Los Angeles, Office of the City Clerk
Council and Public Services
(213) 978-1537
zina.cheng@lacity.org

On Mon, Jun 12, 2017 at 4:05 PM, Darryl Molina Sarmiento <dmolina@cbeal.org> wrote:

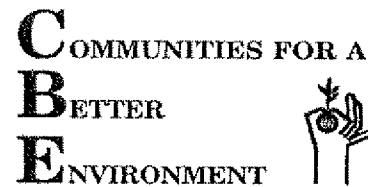
From: Darryl Molina Sarmiento
Sent: Monday, June 12, 2017 4:03 PM
To: 'sharon.dickinson@lacity.org' <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>; 'michael.espinosa@lacity.org' <michael.espinosa@lacity.org>; 'maria.espinoza@lacity.org' <maria.espinoza@lacity.org>; 'sharon.gin@lacity.org' <sharon.gin@lacity.org>
Subject: Please submit attached letter to Council File #17-0447

Hello,

Please submit the attached letter from Communities for a Better Environment to Council File #17-0447.
Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Darryl Molina Sarmiento
Southern California Program Director
Communities for a Better Environment
6326 Pacific Blvd., Suite 300
Huntington Park, CA 90255
323-826-9771x105
www.cbecal.org



Via In Electronic Mail

June 2, 2017

Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Support for Motion for Land Use and Legal Analysis of Setback Around Oil and Gas Extraction in Los Angeles (Council File # 17-0447)

Dear Honorable Council President Wesson, Council Member Buscaino and Council Members:

We write on behalf of Communities for a Better Environment (“CBE”) to express our strong support for the motion introduced on April 19, 2017 (Council File # 17-0447) directing the City Attorney, Petroleum Administrator and Department of City Planning to perform a legal and land use study of an ordinance establishing a 2,500-foot setback separating oil and gas extraction operations from sensitive land uses like homes, schools and hospitals. Such an analysis is a common sense, necessary step to meaningfully address the inherently incompatible nature of oil drilling in residential neighborhoods. We applaud the leadership of Council President Wesson in introducing this motion and of Council members Bonin, Cedillo, Harris-Dawson, Koretz, and Martinez for co-sponsoring the motion.

CBE works, organizes in, and has members in Wilmington, Los Angeles, a neighborhood in the City of Los Angeles that is located on one of the largest oil fields in the country. The community of Wilmington carries the largest drilling burden in all of the City of Los Angeles, and residents suffer from severe cumulative environmental impacts. Several companies drill in Wilmington. One company alone, Warren E&P, is authorized to construct and operate up to a staggering total of 540 wells, and at least two other oil companies run drilling operations on residential streets in Wilmington. Residents have reported noxious odors, headaches, asthma, rashes, burning eyes, ground vibrations, and stressful noise. Wells sit directly adjacent to a little league baseball field, and across the street from homes, apartments, and other buildings where residents work, study, play, and pray. Wilmington ranks in the top 5% of communities with the highest pollution exposure and social vulnerability in the state. The cancer risk in Wilmington is among the highest in Southern California.

CBE is a member organization of the Stand Together Against Neighborhood Drilling – Los Angeles (“STAND-L.A.”) coalition. STAND-L.A. is an environmental justice coalition of community groups that seeks to end neighborhood drilling to protect the health and safety of

Angelenos on the frontlines of urban oil extraction.

Oil and gas extraction operations emit pollution at all stages, including well site construction, drilling, production, transportation, and waste disposal. Most emissions of toxic air pollutants from oil and gas development in the Los Angeles Region, including emissions of benzene—a known carcinogen—occur both in conventional and extreme extraction.¹ Furthermore, when engaging in extreme oil extraction techniques, such as hydraulic fracturing and acidizing, oil and gas extraction operations use large amounts of reproductive, immunological, and neurological toxins, carcinogens, and endocrine disrupting chemicals, including methanol, hydrochloric and hydrofluoric acid, formaldehyde, and naphthalene²—all of which are hazardous air pollutants under federal law³.

Oil and gas extraction operations emit criteria pollutants, including volatile organic compounds and nitrous oxides, which combine to form ground-level ozone, a dangerous chemical that can burn tissue in the lungs, causing it to age prematurely.⁴ Chronic exposure to ground level ozone can cause “asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases[], and is particularly damaging to children, active young adults who spend time outdoors, and the [elderly.]”⁵ A study published in 2016 found that summertime asthma attacks will increase due to ozone formed from oil and gas drilling emissions, resulting in emergency visits, missed school days for children, and missed work days for adults.⁶ “Small changes in ozone smog concentrations in areas with large total populations can have [] large total health impact numbers.”⁷ Thus, oil and gas extraction operations in densely populated County neighborhoods pose a serious health risk.

Toxic chemicals particularly affect the health of young people who are especially sensitive to pollution. Community members of Wilmington have a fundamental human right to grow up, live, work and play in a healthy environment and a strong interest in protecting the earth’s climate, on which the survival of future generations depends.

Los Angeles is the largest and most densely populated urban oil field in the nation. The City of LA hosts more than 900 active oil wells, with over 77% located within 2,500 feet of a home or sensitive land use such as a school, park or hospital. More than half of the active wells are located

¹ Cal. Council on Science & Tech. & Lawrence Berkeley Nat’l Lab. (Jul. 2015) *An Independent Scientific Assessment of Well Stimulation in California*, Vol. 3, at 212-215, 240, 258, available at <http://ccst.us/publications/2015/2015SB4-v3.pdf>.

² Physicians for Social Responsibility, et al. (Jun. 2014) *Dirty Dozen: The 12 Most Commonly Used Air Toxics in Oil Drilling*, at 4-6, available at <http://www.psr-la.org/wp-content/uploads/20140611-Air-Toxics-One-Year-Report-CBD-PSRLA.pdf>. Note that similar chemicals are used for maintenance and other activities during traditional drilling as well. Abdullah, Khadeeja, et al. (2017) *Toxicity of Acidization Fluids Used in California Oil Exploration*, *Toxicological & Environmental Chemistry*, Vol. 99, Issue 1, 78-94, available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02772248.2016.1160285>.

³ U.S. Env’t Prot. Agency, *Initial List of Hazardous Air Pollutants with Modifications*, <https://www.epa.gov/haps/initial-list-hazardous-air-pollutants-modifications>.

⁴ Theo Colborn, et al. (2011) *Natural Gas Operations from a Public Health Perspective*, *Human & Eco. Risk Assess.*: Int’l J., Vol. 17, Issue 5 at 5.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Lesley Fleischman, et al. (Aug. 2016) *Gasping for Breath*, Clean Air Task Force at 8, available at http://www.catf.us/resources/publications/files/Gasping_for_Breath.pdf.

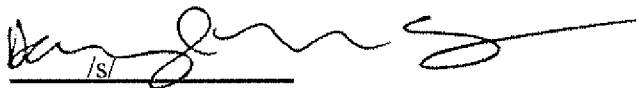
⁷ *Id.* at 11.

in low-income Latino and African-American neighborhoods already overburdened by environmental hazards, such as Wilmington and South L.A. Residents from these neighborhoods have documented serious health problems—including nosebleeds, chronic migraines, nausea, asthma and other respiratory illness—in addition to daily disruption from drilling noise and vibrations, foul odors, and diesel truck traffic.

Oil drilling operations are wholly incompatible with residential neighborhoods, and we urge the Council to act swiftly to pass the motion for a legal and land use study as an important step toward alleviating the harm that front-line communities experience daily. Every Angeleno deserves to live in a safe and healthy neighborhood.

Thank you for your attention and action on matters that directly impact the health and safety of residents living near oil drilling operations. Please contact us if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darryl Molina', with a horizontal line underneath it. A small '/s/' is written below the first part of the signature.

Darryl Molina
Southern California Program Director
Communities for a Better Environment
dmolina@cbecal.org
(323) 826-9771, ext. 105