

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 5, 2019

Acting State Director Joe Stout  
Bureau of Land Management  
2800 Cottage Way Suite W1623  
Sacramento, CA 95825

Dear Acting State Director Stout:

We write to urge you not to proceed with the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) proposal to open California public lands to hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as fracking. We ask that BLM maintain the moratorium of new oil and gas leases on federal land, which has been in place since 2013. The existing moratorium in California is broadly supported, consistent with the state's aggressive plan to combat climate change, and in place to protect the climate, clean air, public lands, and the supply of water.

In 2013, a federal court found BLM in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act for not adequately preparing an Environmental Impact Statement prior to the sale of leases. A moratorium has been in place since, and BLM's proposal marks a significant departure from past policy. BLM is mandated to manage public lands "without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment" and prevent undue degradation of public lands.

Any new leasing of federal lands and mineral estate for oil and gas drilling is incompatible with that mandate. In particular, BLM's plan to open nearly 1.2 million of federal mineral estate and 400,000 acres of public land to fossil fuel production, as described in the Bakersfield Field Office Hydraulic Fracturing Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) (84 FR 17885) on April 26, 2019, stands in stark contrast to California's energy goals.

California's embrace of renewable energy and zero-emission transportation alternatives is propelling the economy forward and should serve as a model for maintaining our country's position as a global energy leader. Petroleum production in California is decreasing and opening new public lands to oil and gas extraction conflicts with California's commitment toward a sustainable future, free from reliance on fossil fuels. Further, BLM's proposal runs counter to the aggressive course California has set to combat climate change and to meet its share of greenhouse gas emission reductions outlined in the Paris Agreement.

Specifically, BLM proposes opening public lands near Carrizo Plain National Monument, Los Padres National Forest, Sequoia National Forest and Sierra National Forest to new oil and gas

drilling. These cherished and iconic California landscapes and natural resources need to be protected and new oil and gas extraction have no place in these wild landscapes.

Contrary to BLM's unsupported assertion in the draft SEIS, this proposal will have serious environmental justice impacts. California's Central Valley has already been disproportionately burdened by air pollution. The Environmental Protection Agency, along with state agencies, have worked hard to develop and implement a plan to reduce pollution. Expanded oil and gas operations put communities at risk and jeopardizes efforts to achieve clean air.

Fracking also presents an unacceptable risk to California's precious groundwater resources. Fracking is water-intensive and in California occurs at much shallower depths than other parts of the country, meaning it takes place closer to the surface, and to groundwater. This presents a greater risk of contaminating ground and surface water supplies if improperly conducted. These heightened risks are unnecessary.

It is for these reasons that we urge you to pursue a science-based, environmentally and economically sound national energy strategy that fosters the development of renewable energy sources, rather than opening new areas of our precious public lands for oil and gas extraction. We believe it is critical California be allowed to continue on its path toward clean and renewable energy – BLM's proposal will only set back our hard earned progress. BLM should abandon its plan and leave in place the moratorium on leasing public lands and mineral estate in California for new oil and gas extraction.

Sincerely,



SALUD CARBAJAL  
Member of Congress



DIANNE FEINSTEIN  
United States Senator



ALAN LOWENTHAL  
Member of Congress



KAMALA D. HARRIS  
United States Senator



NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGAN  
Member of Congress



JULIA BROWNLEY  
Member of Congress

*Mark Desaulnier*

MARK DESAULNIER  
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*Anna G. Eshoo*

ANNA G. ESHOO  
Member of Congress

*Jared Huffman*

JARED HUFFMAN  
Member of Congress

*Ro Khanna*

RO KHANNA  
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*Barbara Lee*

BARBARA LEE  
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*Doris Matsui*

DORIS O. MATSUI  
Member of Congress

*Jerry McNerney*

JERRY McNERNEY  
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*Grace F. Napolitano*

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*Jackie Speier*

JACKIE SPEIER  
Member of Congress

*Jimmy Panetta*

JIMMY PANETTA  
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