

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chair
Appropriations Committee
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chair
Environment and Related Agencies
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
Environment and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwomen Lowey and McCollum, and Ranking Members Granger and Joyce:

As negotiations ensue for a fiscal year 2021 (FY21) spending bill, we urge you to maintain provisions protecting public lands in California from fracking and new oil and gas development. Language prohibiting federal funds from being used to allow for any new oil and gas leasing, permitting, and drilling on federal public lands within California's Central Coast, Bakersfield, and Carrizo Plain National Monument was adopted by the House of Representatives in section 123 of H.R. 7608, State, Foreign Operations, Agriculture, Rural Development, Interior, Environment, Military Construction, and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2021.

Implementing a federal moratorium on oil and gas leasing activities in public lands is in line with the state of California's plan to fight the climate crisis, ensure clean air and water supply. It is also consistent with similar moratoriums on offshore oil drilling—which have enjoyed bipartisan support from both Democrats and Republicans. Evidence shows that fracking is a cause of significant water and air pollution, harm to imperiled species, land subsidence and low-level seismic events. Despite the growing scientific body of evidence pointing to the substantial harm fracking causes, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has chosen to ignore it.

In December 2019, the BLM announced a final record of decision to allow for new oil and gas leasing in California. 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. Separately, on May 21, 2020, BLM also approved a new oil well and pipeline in the Carrizo Plain National Monument. This would be the first well the BLM approves drilling on since the establishment of the monument in 2001.

These iconic California landscapes and natural resources need to be protected. New oil and gas drilling have no place in these natural habitats. Despite BLM's unsupported claims, these proposals 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 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.

Additionally, our public lands are also an essential asset to our local outdoor and tourism economy. In California alone, the outdoor recreation economy contributes \$92 billion in economic spending annually and supports over 650,000 jobs.

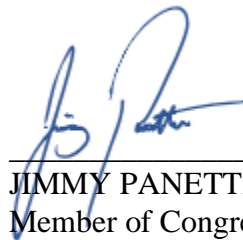
It is imperative that Congress take the appropriate steps to protect California's public lands, which are economic hubs that rely on healthy ecosystems. As such, Congress should not allow taxpayer funds to be used to put our outdoor economy at risk and sell off our public lands. Therefore, we ask you to maintain section 123 of H.R. 7608.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



SALUD CARBAJAL
Member of Congress



JIMMY PANETTA
Member of Congress

ALAN LOWENTHAL
Member of Congress

GRACE F. NAPOLITANO
Member of Congress

JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress

RO KHANNA
Member of Congress

JULIA BROWNLEY
Member of Congress

NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGÁN
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MARK TAKANO
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ANNA G. ESHOO
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JUDY CHU
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BARBARA LEE
Member of Congress

HARLEY ROUDA
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