

November 20, 2023

**RE: Exxon Mobil Corporation's Application to Renew Lease Nos. 4977.1 and 7163.1**

Dear Commissioner:

Today, the California Asian Pacific ("CalAsian"), California African American, and California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce jointly submit this letter urging the timely renewal of Exxon Mobil Lease Nos. 4677.1 and 7163.1 for its Santa Ynez Unit. Upon granting the renewal of these leases, the California State Lands Commission ("CSLC") will be doing a great service to the small- and minority-owned business community in Santa Barbara County by positioning the greater region for economic growth and a more prosperous and efficient energy transition for all.

The Santa Ynez Unit has been sitting idle but preserved for more than eight years, and as we understand, the platforms and operational infrastructure's integrity has been maintained through constant upkeep and improvements. When in full operation, the Santa Ynez Unit will provide hundreds of jobs to the region – including good paying union jobs often for minority individuals – which tangentially drive substantial economic traffic for those who conduct business in the diverse Santa Barbara County community.

California has recently made great progress in advancing business interests of small- and minority-owned entities through the passage of A.B. 258, which streamlines accessibility to a variety of state resources for adversely impacted communities such as those adjacent to the Santa Ynez Unit in Santa Barbara County. Failure to renew the Santa Ynez Unit leases would directly contradict the goals and measures established by the entire state legislature and administration to spur economic development in these communities.

Additionally, there are another 11 pipeline leases you will eventually have to consider whether to renew. The rationale and ultimate decision on these leases will ultimately impact additional approvals down the road. How CSLC acts on these leases will also determine how stakeholders engage in the future and ultimately whether businesses feel it is safe to invest in offshore facilities off the coast of California – including offshore wind.

Not only would this threaten a potentially robust sector for job and wage growth of minority individuals, but it would slow down the rapidly accelerating energy transition across the State of California given decarbonization and reporting targets set forth by S.B. 253 and S.B. 261, and the discouragement of those who aim to drive the transition towards a cleaner energy future.

As the lease renewal applications enter their final weeks ahead of decisions from the CSLC, we thank you for your time and consideration of the concerns from small- and minority-owned businesses and constituents who will be financially impacted to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars by the decision administered on Lease Nos. 4677.1 and 7163.1. We

urge the Commission to align their decision with those on the positive side of greater community impacts and avoid politicization of a process that demands objectivity.

Sincerely and signed,



Pat Fong Kushida  
President & CEO  
California Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce



Ahmad Holmes  
Chief Operating Officer  
California African American Chamber of Commerce



Julian Cañete  
President & CEO  
California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce

**From:** [Constance May](#)  
**To:** [CSLC Commission Meetings](#)  
**Subject:** End CA's Offshore Drilling Leases  
**Date:** Friday, December 1, 2023 2:05:13 PM

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**Attention:** This email originated from outside of SLC and should be treated with extra caution.

Hello,

Offshore drilling poses a persistent threat to our coastlines, wildlife, coastal economy, and way of life. Most of California's aging offshore infrastructure was built in the 1960s, has passed its intended lifespan, and poses safety concerns. These platforms are ticking time bombs for the next major oil spill.

It is the State Lands Commission's duty to eliminate this threat to the ocean and to public resources and welfare by terminating all offshore oil and gas leases immediately.

The state is not obligated to pay polluters to stop drilling, spilling, and contributing to the climate crisis. Offshore oil and gas leases are on public land, and the operators rights are limited to the terms of the lease, which requires operations to "prevent pollution and contamination of the ocean and tidelands or any impairment of and interference with bathing, fishing or navigation in the waters of the ocean."

In October 2021, the San Pedro Bay Pipeline spilled, closing beaches and fisheries, killing hundreds of birds, marine mammals, and fish. Two months later, a second pipeline failed in the same area, threatening sensitive areas including Bolsa Chica wetlands, Talbert Marsh, Newport Slough and the Santa Ana River.

This pattern of spills demonstrates a pervasive issue: California's oil industry has a bad track record of violations including at least 381 offshore violations of regulations between 2015 to 2018.

During state inspections in March 2015, regulators found that all 42 wellheads on Platform Eva had "moderate to significant corrosion." On Platform Esther, most of the 30 wellheads were found to be corroded as well as the valves and flanges.

Oil spill risk, subsea pipeline corrosion, and instances of equipment failure are all accelerating with time. There has never been a more critical time than now to terminate leases and hold polluters fully responsible for plugging, abandonment, and decommissioning.

Thanks,  
Constance May  
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