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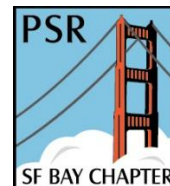
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SIERRA CLUB
SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA CHAPTER



CENTER ON
RACE, POVERTY
& THE ENVIRONMENT



May 8, 2025

Senate Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Room 2200
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 542 (Limón) SUPPORT

To the Honorable Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee – Chair Caballero, Vice Chair Seyarto, and Senators Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, and Wahab:

The Center for Biological Diversity and Environmental Defense Center submit our strong support of Senate Bill 542 ([SB 542](#)), with thanks to the author Senator Limón. This bill aims to protect California communities and the environment from the known, destructive risks of oil spills. SB542 provides transparency with important updates to California's oil spill prevention laws, including mandatory pipeline safety testing and a public process for ensuring operator oil spill responsibility.

Oil spills have caused profound and lasting damage to California's coastal communities, economy, and environment. The 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill dumped 4.2 million gallons of crude oil into the ocean and was a catalyst for the modern environmental movement. The 2015 Refugio oil spill, which was caused by a ruptured coastal pipeline, damaged property, killed marine life, and demonstrated that our state oil spill cost estimates are outdated. The 2021 Orange County spill was yet another reminder of the risks of offshore oil and pipelines. These incidents have devastated marine life, harmed fragile coastal habitats, closed fisheries and beaches, and impaired local economies.

Over 150 million visitors a year enjoy California's coastlines. Nearly 600,000 jobs and over \$42 billion in GDP rely on clean beaches and a healthy ocean.¹ According to a 2024 NOAA report, coastal tourism and recreation produced 47% of GDP and 67% of the employment of California's marine economy.² That is compared with offshore mineral resources, which produced only 5% of GDP and 1% of the employment. These economic risks and benefits must be weighed appropriately. The coastal tourism and recreation sector, their employees, and their clients must be protected from the threat of another oil spill from California's aging oil and gas infrastructure.

SB 542 addresses these concerns and helps to prevent oil leaks and spills by requiring idle oil pipelines to undergo rigorous tests before a restart. Additionally, the bill creates a transparent and updated framework to determine operator financial responsibility in the event of an oil spill, to enable holding responsible parties accountable and to fairly and more accurately calculate the true costs of cleanup and restoration.

We urge you to support SB 542; please vote AYE to help protect California against destructive oil spills.

¹ *California's Clean Coast Economy*. Oceana, usa.oceana.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/4046/california.pdf. Accessed May 1, 2025.

² *2024 Marine Economy Report*. NOAA Office of Coastal Management, 2024, coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/. Accessed 1 Sept. 2023.

Sincerely,

Linda Krop
Chief Counsel
Environmental Defense Center

Grant Bixby
Founding Member
Business Alliance for Protecting the Pacific
Coast

Mati Waiya
Tribal Chair
Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation

Ramona du Houx
Communications Director
Elected Officials to Protect America
Code Blue

Nicole Ghio
California Director
Food & Water Watch

Michael Lyons
President
Get Oil Out!

Valerie Ventre-Hutton
Legislative Analyst
350 Bay Area Action

Grant Bixby
Principal Broker
Bixby Residential, Inc.

RL Miller
Founder
Climate Hawks Vote

Mati Waiya
Executive Director
Ventura Coastkeeper

Rachel Altman
Co-chair
CLUE-SB Environmental Justice Work Group

Miyoko Sakashita
Oceans Director, Senior Counsel
Center for Biological Diversity

Tina Calderon
Director, Ocean Protectors Program
Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous
Peoples

Ilonka Zlatar
Climate Justice Organizer
Oil and Gas Action Network

Nick Mucha
Senior Director
Environmental Issues and Strategy
Patagonia

Gabriela Facio
Policy Strategist
Sierra Club California

Sharon Broberg
Steering Committee Member
350 Santa Barbara

Hattie Ellison
Executive Co-Chair
UCSB AS Environmental Affairs Board

Nathan Taft
Senior Campaigner
Stand.earth

Ted Morton
Executive Director
Santa Barbara Channelkeeper

Shoshana Wechsler
Co-Coordinator
Sunflower Alliance

Jack Eidt
Co-Founder
SoCal 350 Climate Action

Emily Engel
Group Chair
Sierra Club Santa Barbara Group

Woody Hastings
Phase Out Polluting Fuels Program Director
The Climate Center

Mati Waiya
Executive Director
Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation

Maricruz Ramirez
Community Organizer
Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment

Robert M. Gould
President
SF Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility

Rachel Altman
Co-chair
CLUE-SB Environmental Justice Work Group

Janet Garcia
Co-Chair
Quabajai Coastal Chumash
Keepers of the Western Gate