

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 25, 2020

State Director Karen Mouritsen
Bureau of Land Management
2800 Cottage Way Suite W1623
Sacramento, CA 95825

Dear State Director Mouritsen:

This letter is to express our strong opposition to the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) proposal for a December 2020 oil and gas lease sale in California. Given the Kern County oil spill last year that released over 1.3 million gallons of oil and water, we disagree with the decision to permit oil and gas extraction in this area without substantial additional guarantees of safety and stewardship over the surrounding environment.

Last year, an oil spill in Kern County lasted over 100 days and released more than 1.3 million gallons of oily water, one of the country's largest onshore releases in the last decade, and that took months to clean. Since 2003, in that same oil field, a separate surface expression has flowed on and off and released an estimated 82 million gallons of oil and water.

In its own Environmental Assessment for the proposed leases, BLM states the threat clearly, writing a "major impact to surface water resources could occur" if a spill is not attended to in a timely manner, yet it made no mention of these previous surface expressions, the delays to effectively contain them, and the impacts on health and the environment. Given these risks, we believe BLM should abandon this proposal and maintain the moratorium on lease sales that has existed since 2012.

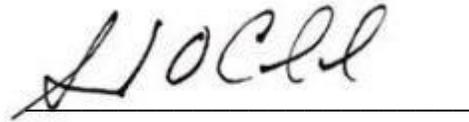
California is currently witnessing its worst wildfire season on record, fueled by a warming climate. It is clear that oil and gas extraction cannot be conducted safely in this region, and expanding oil and gas drilling will only hasten our climate crisis.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress