June 17, 2019

The Honorable Senator Anthony Portantino
Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations
State Capitol, Room 5064
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 585 (Limon) Public Lands: Oil, Gas, and Mineral Leases - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Portantino:

I am writing on behalf of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to state our support for AB 585 (Limon), which would authorize the State Lands Commission (Commission), when considering the approval of an assignment, transfer, or sublet of an oil and gas lease, to consider whether a proposed assignee is likely to comply with the provisions of the assigned, transferred, or sublet lease for the duration of the lease term. Additionally the bill will require a lessee, assignee, transferee, sublessee, or operator to submit to the commission, in writing, a notarized affidavit of liability for the decommissioning of production facilities and related infrastructure under the jurisdiction of the commission within six months after the date on which a lease terminates or expires, and require the lessee, assignee, transferee, sublessee, or operator to also covenant in the notarized affidavit, to commence the process of decommissioning the production facilities and related infrastructure within one year after the date on which the lease terminates or expires.

The Commission has not issued a new offshore oil development lease in nearly 50 years, but many of the leases issued before then are still in effect. AB 585 (Limon) will strengthen existing law to reduce or eliminate the State’s future financial liability for decommissioning oil and gas infrastructure and ensure that all lessees fulfill the contractual decommissioning obligations on their leases.

The Board of Supervisors adopted a 2019 Legislative Platform that includes the Oil and Gas Infrastructure Safety and Compliance Legislative Plank, which specifically states that the County will support legislation to strengthen rules set forth by, and enforcement capabilities of, the State Lands Commission to require timely and proper abandonment of oil and gas facilities.

For these reasons, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors is pleased to support AB 585 (Limon). If you have questions about the Board’s position, please contact the County’s Legislative Coordinator, Dennis Bozanich at 805-568-3403 or dbozanich@countyofsb.org.

Sincerely,

Cliff Berg
Governmental Advocates, Inc.
cc: The Honorable Assemblymember Monique Limon, Author
     Members, Senate Committee on Appropriations
     Ashley Ames, Consultant, Senate Committee on Appropriations
     Todd Moffitt, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus
     The Honorable Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson, 19th Senate District
     The Honorable Assemblymember Jordan Cunningham, 35th Assembly District
     Members, County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors
     Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
     Dennis Bozanich, Legislative Coordinator, County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors