



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 13, 2021

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Bipartisan Coalition to Protect Working Californians and Access to Affordable, Reliable Energy

A bipartisan coalition today announced support for protecting quality jobs as the pandemic-battered economy recovers and to also keep energy affordable and reliable for all Californians.

Last fall, after the state experienced rolling blackouts, Governor Newsom [signed an executive order](#) that would curb in-state oil production. This could increase energy costs for all Californians and would lead to a greater reliance on foreign oil, rather than local energy produced under the world's strictest environmental protections.

The California Independent Petroleum Association (CIPA) led an [petition drive](#) that resulted in nearly three thousand California residents, including energy workers, who asked the Governor to protect domestic oil and natural gas production. The petition says eliminating domestically produced energy will hurt California's environmental leadership, kill thousands of quality careers, eliminate tax revenue for vital services, and take away affordable and reliable energy choices during our state's economic recovery. The petitions will be delivered to the Governor later this week.

Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle joined CIPA at a virtual news conference discussing how the state needs to protect quality careers within the diverse workforce of the oil and natural gas industry and ensure Californians have access to affordable and reliable energy.

"We have all been impacted by COVID-19 and our State must turn our focus to the urgent issues of homelessness, evictions, job security, and vaccine distributions, to name a few," said Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva (D-Fullerton). "As legislators it is our obligation to advocate and represent the interest of our community. The oil and natural gas industry provides the energy needed to make modern life possible; whether it be keeping our houses warm or allowing our children to do remote learning, these jobs are vital for the security of our working families."

"Families in major parts of my Central Valley Senate district rely on the good jobs provided by California's oil and gas industry. So far, no one has put forward a detailed, realistic plan to ensure oil and gas jobs in the Central Valley transition to clean energy jobs with the same pay and benefits. These jobs must be front and center in any discussion of a 'post-oil' California," said Senator Melissa Hurtado (D-Sanger).

"The Governor represents a state that has the largest and most industrious energy-producing counties in the nation. Jobs in these industries provide high paying careers, opportunities, experience, and a first or second chance for many to support their families, buy a home, or save for retirement. Given California's reliance on oil has not decreased dramatically over the last thirty years, it is simply unrealistic to think that there is a path forward in this state without oil and gas. I join oil producers, large and small, in calling on the governor to stop the assault on the lifeblood of our Central Valley," said Senate Republican Leader Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield).

“The Governor’s actions worsen energy reliability in our state, which we saw is a real issue in California just last year with the blackouts we experienced statewide. This is something so basic and foundational,” said Assemblyman Vince Fong (R-Kern County). “Kern County has been at the center of powering this state for decades, yet the Governor is displacing thousands of good, local jobs in my community and weakening one of the lynchpins of our local economy. This is unacceptable.”

“Eliminating oil and natural gas in California means depriving people of reliable and affordable transportation and electricity. It also means we will still have to import huge amounts of it from other places. You cannot run a 21st century economy, the fifth largest in the world, on electricity produced by wind and solar alone. It is natural gas that keeps the lights on in California,” said Assemblyman Jim Patterson (R-Fresno).

One of the most powerful parts of the news conference was heartfelt testimony from oil and natural gas industry employees who shared what their careers have meant for them and their families. [Click here](#) to view these stories.

To watch the virtual press conference, [click here](#).

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