



Issam Najm,
President

Susan Gorman-Chang,
Vice President

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Treasurer

Gabriel Khanlian,
Secretary

David Balen,
Signer

Asaad Alnajjar

Cheri Derohanian

Jason Hector

Alex Kim

Becky Leveque

Jennifer Milbauer

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On February 1 and 2, 2017, public hearings were held by the Department of Conservation's Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in accordance with the requirements of SB 380. The objective of these hearings was to receive public comment on the findings of both State agencies related to the re-opening of the Aliso Canyon facility owned and operated by the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). The PRNC president, Issam Najm, representing the PRNC, prepared two statements that were read at the two meetings. This document includes the text of both statements for the record.

Statement of February 1, 2017 – My name is Issam Najm, and I am the President of the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council representing more than 30,000 residents of the City of Los Angeles. I am here speaking on behalf of the Neighborhood Council, not the City of Los Angeles.

As everyone knows, the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council has taken a clear position on this matter. We believe that this facility is incompatible with its urban environment because it represents a clear danger to public health as demonstrated by the 4-month disaster caused by the catastrophic failure of one of its 115 wells.

Yesterday, we submitted extensive comments on the findings of the Department of Conservation regarding the well safety review, and on those of the Public Utilities Commission regarding the storage volume needs. I will not take this public testimony time to repeat those comments, but I do want to articulate our general perspective and overarching position.

We are dismayed that in all the calculations made by all the engineers and experts, no one has bothered to factor in the risk to public health. When it comes down to cost versus public health, there should be no argument! In 21st Century California, we should NOT be compromising public health because we don't know what to do with an archaic energy delivery system.

However, the fact that the gas delivery system currently depends on Aliso Canyon in a high-demand emergency is not lost on us. To be clear, we are referring to a real emergency, not a fabricated one. Nonetheless, we understand that the PUC and gas company customers are concerned about potential shortages in high demand days. To that end, we are proposing a very straightforward solution that should be acceptable to everyone:

1. *Maintain Aliso Canyon at its current status indefinitely, which is an emergency supply facility ONLY, and NOT an operating facility. There needs to be a clear delineation of what constitutes an emergency gas need. For example, all supply lines must be at 100% capacity before emergency withdrawals take place.*
2. *Recognize that the facility is a clear threat to public health and needs to be retired.*
3. *Identify a clear expedited schedule for the retirement of the facility.*
4. *Implement the necessary changes in the gas delivery system to eliminate the need for Aliso Canyon.*

This approach satisfies any concerns about gas supply shortages, real or imaginary, while achieving the community's goal of ending its nightmare. This solution is feasible. It only needs the State to believe in it and want to implement it.

Our people deserve to have their basic human right to live in a safe and healthy environment. God knows we have earned that right after living through 4 months of hell, and for anyone to have the audacity to ask us to give more of our lives and our health to this matter is simply outrageous.

Thank you.

Statement of February 2, 2017 – My name is Issam Najm, and I am the President of the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council representing more than 30,000 residents of the City of Los Angeles. I am here speaking on behalf of the Neighborhood Council, not the City of Los Angeles.

First, I would like to say that the meeting disruption that happened yesterday does not reflect the character of tens of thousands of law-abiding citizens of Porter Ranch who have full respect for the democratic process embodied in SB380 and this hearing.

I came onto the Neighborhood Council only because of the Aliso Canyon well failure, and it has consumed my life for the last year. I am one of the lucky ones who is not experiencing health problems (that I know of). But I cannot sit idle while my neighbors go through this nightmare. From the beginning when the gas was still spewing out of the facility, I appealed to the County Health Department to conduct a clinical study of the impacted members of our community in order to render a clear medical opinion of these ailments. The County rejected my request two times, and chose to only conduct health surveys. Health surveys are meaningless here.

Over the last six months, I have spent hundreds of hours dissecting the gas supply and demand data in Southern California spanning a 10 year period, making the case that the system, indeed, can be operated without Aliso Canyon. However, I don't understand why I

should have to do this? I don't understand why a citizen has to be out alone in the wilderness trying to find his way around these complex matters? I somehow had the foolish expectation that the job of the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, was to look after the wellbeing of those people and do what's best for them. I should not have to make the case to my government... my government should make the case for me.

We have submitted to DOGGR and PUC a proposal for a clear path forward that calls for the following:

- 1. Maintain Aliso Canyon at its current status, which is an emergency supply facility ONLY, and NOT an operating facility. There needs to be a clear delineation of what constitutes an emergency gas need. For example, all supply lines must be at 100% capacity before emergency withdrawals take place.*
- 2. Recognize that the facility is a clear threat to public health and needs to be retired.*
- 3. Identify a clear expedited schedule for the retirement of the facility.*
- 4. Implement the necessary changes in the gas usage and delivery system to eliminate the need for Aliso Canyon.*

This approach satisfies any concerns about gas supply shortages, real or imaginary, while achieving the community's goal of ending its nightmare. This solution is feasible. It only needs my government to want to do it.

In our humble opinion, if the outcome is anything different from this, then it only means that the concern over gas shortages is merely an excuse, and will only cement the people's belief that this government is not of them, by them, or for them.

Thank You.
