

MONTEREY COUNTY



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February 8, 2021

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta
406 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R. 479, California Central Coast Conservation Act – SUPPORT

Dear Congressman Panetta:

I am writing today on behalf of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors to express our support for the California Central Coast Conservation Act (H.R. 479).

The California Central Coast Conservation Act would impose a moratorium on all new oil and gas leasing on federal public land on the central coast of California. As you know, the County strongly opposed the Trump administration's 2019 decision to allow fracking and drilling on 725,500 acres of public lands and mineral estate across California's Central Coast and the San Francisco Bay Area. The County filed a protest of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) decision that highlighted our primary concerns over potential public health impacts, environmental concerns, protection of underground sources of drinking water, the preservation of public infrastructure, dam safety, and the preservation of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

We support the approach of your legislation that would prohibit the BLM from implementing the decision until it completes and publishes a supplemental environmental impact statement assessing the potential impacts of oil and gas drilling on air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, climate change, groundwater, surface water, seismicity, wildlife and plant species, low-income communities, communities of color, and indigenous communities. We are also hopeful that the Biden administration will review this misguided decision as part of its broader effort to address the climate crisis.

We are pleased to offer our support for the California Central Coast Conservation Act, and we thank you for your leadership on this important issue facing Monterey County and other communities on the central coast of California.

Sincerely,

DRAFT

Wendy Root Askew
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Cc: U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator Alex Padilla