

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

ROBERT B. WEISENMILLER, CHAIR

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July 19, 2017

President Michael Picker
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear President Picker:

The recent gas leak at the Aliso Canyon natural gas storage facility reminds us of the dangers of our dependency on fossil fuels. The actions we take regarding our energy infrastructure now will shape our ability to realize the state's fight against climate change over the next decade, if not the next century.

Under the leadership of Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., California has set some of the most ambitious climate change goals in the world. In 2015, the Governor set a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent compared to 1990 levels and the legislature codified this target in Senate Bill 32 (Pavley, Chapter 249, Statutes of 2016).

In order to meet this goal, we must take decisive actions now to increase the use of renewable energy, improve energy efficiency, electrify the transportation sector and expand the availability of cleaner fuels and technologies. With the State's climate target in mind, Governor Brown has asked me to plan for the permanent closure of the Aliso Canyon natural gas storage facility, and I urge the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to do the same.

As you are aware, Senate Bill 350 (Pavley, Chapter 14, Statutes 2016), directs the CPUC to consult with the Energy Commission in the proceedings considering the facilities future. My staff is prepared to work with the CPUC and other agencies on a plan to phase out the use of the Aliso Canyon natural gas storage facility within ten years.

Closure of Aliso Canyon is no small task and the recommendation to close the facility is not one that I take lightly or without thoughtful consideration. However, I am confident that through sustained investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency, electric storage technologies and other strategies, we can make this transition a reality. In the short term, we must continue to closely monitor energy reliability in Southern California through peak usage in the summer and winter. We must also work with all parties to pursue effective mitigation measures to meet the energy demands of residential and commercial customers.

Lastly, the Governor's 2016 emergency proclamation on the Aliso Canyon leak called for an assessment of the long-term viability of all natural gas storage facilities in California. This assessment is well underway and is being conducted by an independent

team of scientists organized by the California Council on Science and Technology and is scheduled to be complete at the end of the calendar year. It is scheduled to be complete at the end of the calendar year and will inform how the state will rethink all natural gas storage facilities in California.

I look forward to continuing to work with you to build a clean energy future and ensure energy reliability for all Californians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert B. Weisenmiller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Robert B. Weisenmiller
Chair

Cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Kamala Harris
Congressman Brad Sherman
Congressman Steve Knight
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