



**BRAD SHERMAN**  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

January 15, 2016

The Honorable Jerry Brown  
Governor of California  
State Capitol, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Brown,

Thank you for your leadership in declaring a state of emergency regarding the natural gas leak in the Aliso Canyon Storage Facility. I write today to highlight perhaps the most important part of your proclamation: paragraph 3.

Specifically, the Proclamation orders:

*3. The California Public Utilities Commission and the California Energy Commission shall take all actions necessary to ensure that Southern California Gas Company maximizes daily withdrawals of natural gas from the Aliso Canyon Storage Facility for use or storage elsewhere.* [Emphasis added]

This order is a critical step. However, I urge you to go further and require the withdrawal of natural gas from the facility to the maximum extent it can be withdrawn and used, stored, or *incinerated safely* elsewhere.

SoCalGas should be prohibited from importing natural gas to the Aliso Canyon service area. All natural gas used in the Los Angeles basin should be drawn from Aliso Canyon rather than other natural gas storage facilities. Homeowners, electric generation facilities, and other industrial facilities throughout the Los Angeles basin need to be urged to safely consume as much Aliso Canyon gas as possible – and they should be encouraged to use additional gas at little to no cost. SoCalGas continues to regard the gas in the Aliso Canyon Storage Facility as an asset. For the people of Porter Ranch, the gas is not an asset, it is a toxin.

SoCalGas should withdraw the maximum amount of natural gas from the Aliso Canyon storage facility every hour of every day, regardless of the demand, and regardless of whether SoCalGas can sell the natural gas. We need to draw down all natural gas in the Aliso Canyon facility to zero – we need to deplete both the working gas and the cushion gas. It is simply wrong to limit withdrawals of gas from the facility that can be sold in the ordinary course of business, or stored in other SoCalGas facilities. Failure to withdraw natural gas from Aliso Canyon as quickly as the infrastructure will allow creates unnecessary threats to public health and the environment.

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Electric utilities are using natural gas far less during the winter than during the summer when air conditioners are operating. They should be incinerating natural gas at the same levels as they do on the hottest days in August.

Clearly SoCalGas should provide, at a discounted price, or for free, natural gas which is beyond the usual needs of its users. In fact, SoCalGas should cover the total cost for electric utilities or others to incinerate maximum quantities of natural gas.

Withdrawing natural gas from the facility will reduce pressure. Thus, the remaining natural gas will leak out of the storage facility more slowly. Every effort must be made to acquire temporary compressors or other equipment so that natural gas can be pulled out of Aliso Canyon, even if the pressure pushing the natural gas through the pipe system has decreased.

SoCalGas should also be exploring ways to pump the natural gas back to its suppliers through the pipelines that run to the Aliso Canyon facility. These possibilities need to be examined expeditiously and implemented immediately if warranted.

As governor, you will of course be concerned with natural gas reliability (in the winter 2016-2017) and the reliability of electric generation (in the summer of 2016). I believe that the activities I advocate for above can be part of an overall plan that assures reliability. And of course, any economic impact should be at the expense of SoCalGas and not its ratepayers.

Thank you for your continued leadership and attention to this urgent matter. If my office can be of any assistance, please feel free to reach out to me directly, or contact Lauren Wolman in my DC office or John Alford in my Sherman Oaks office.

Sincerely,



Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress

cc:  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration  
Department of Oil, Gas & Geothermal Resources  
California Public Utilities Commission