


SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 6/3/02
Department Name: 3rd District
Department No.: 011
Agenda Date: 6/18/02
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 30 minutes
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Gail Marshall 
Third District Supervisor

STAFF CONTACT: Mark Chaconas
Executive Staff Assistant - Third District
568-2197

SUBJECT: Letter to the President of the United States regarding the federal government's refusal to retire 36 off-shore oil and gas leases.

1. Review a letter from the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to the President of the United States regarding the federal government's refusal to retire the 36 oil and gas leases off the coast of California.
2. Authorize the Board Chair to execute and transmit the letter.

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Review a letter from the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to the President of the United States regarding the Federal government's refusal to retire the 36 oil and gas leases off the coast of California.
2. Authorize the Board Chair to execute and transmit the letter.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with Goal No. 1. An Efficient Government Able to Respond Effectively to the Needs of the Community and with Goal No. 2. A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit. and with Goal No. 5. A High Quality of Life for All Residents.

Executive Summary:

The purpose of the attached letter is to clearly state Santa Barbara County's historic opposition to federal off-shore oil and gas leases. Last week Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton announced that the Federal Government would not purchase back the 36 federal oil and gas leases off the coast of California. A similar proposal was affirmatively acted upon for the State of Florida earlier in the month.

Discussion:

The letter your Board is being asked to authorize describes the historic opposition Santa Barbara County has demonstrated to off-shore oil and gas leases. Many of the leases in federal waters date back to 1968 and have yet to be developed.

The Board may be aware of the recent decision by the Federal Government to grant the State of Florida's request to purchase the federal oil and gas leases around that state. In response, the State of California asked the Federal Government to retire the 36 federal oil and gas leases off our coastline. That request was denied.

Unfortunately, the letter written by Secretary of the Interior Norton justifying this decision noted California's lack of opposition to off-shore oil and gas leases as a major reason for the refusal. With all due respect to Secretary Norton, Santa Barbara County has consistently opposed the oil and gas leases in federal waters.

The purpose of this letter is to clearly state our historic opposition to off-shore oil and gas leases and the disappointment with the federal government's notion that California and Santa Barbara County welcome new oil development.

Mandates and Service Levels: No Mandates. No direct impact to County services levels.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts: No direct impacts as a result of this communication.

Special Instructions: Execute letter to the appropriate officials.

Concurrence:

NAOMI SCHWARTZ

First District, Vice Chair

SUSAN J. ROSE

Second District

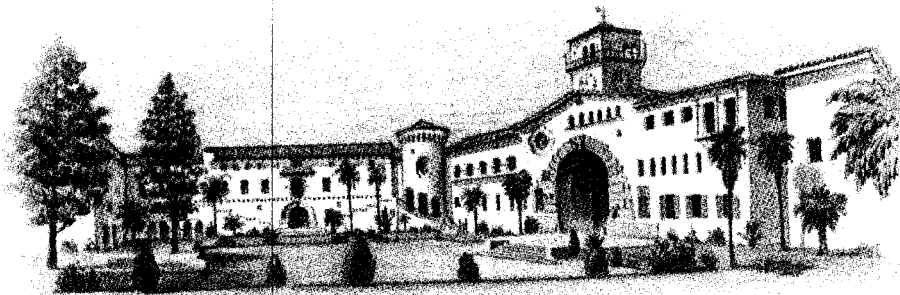
JONI GRAY

Fourth District

TOM URBANSKE

Fifth District

COURT HOUSE



GAIL MARSHALL, Chair

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

June 18, 2002

The Honorable George Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear President Bush,

This letter is in response to Interior Secretary Gale Norton's letter, written at your direction, refusing to consider California's request to buy back the 36 federal oil and gas leases off of the California coast. The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors is extremely disappointed with your administration's ill-advised perception that the State of California and its citizens welcome oil and gas development.

In fact, Santa Barbara County has a long history of opposing the sale of oil and gas leases in federal waters. We opposed the original sales in 1968 as well as the federal government's recent extension of these dormant leases. In addition, Santa Barbara County is a co-litigant with the State of California in order to gain the authority to review expanded off-shore operations in federal waters.

The California coastline is a natural treasure. We are fortunate to enjoy the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and the Channel Islands National Park as well as the Los Padres National Forest, which runs the length of several California coastal counties. Our coastal economies are forced to absorb the impacts of the existing oil and gas operations that are the result of the earlier leases being developed. It is inappropriate to threaten our economies with additional oil and gas development in these federal leases while disregarding the local government's historic and clear resistance.

Santa Barbara County has consistently opposed the sale of oil and gas leases in federal waters. Your decision to perpetuate these leases exposes our natural environment to a potential disaster, threatens the local economy, and disregards the clear position of the local governments and the State.

As the elected body representing the citizens of Santa Barbara County, we ask that you recognize the public's interest and desire for the federal government to act responsibly and retire the 36 federal oil and gas leases off the California coast.

Sincerely,

Gail Marshall
Chair, Board of Supervisors