

Brianda Negrete **Public Comment**

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From: Sanders, Tashina
Sent: Thursday, September 29, 2022 2:29 PM
To: sbcob
Cc: paulvanleer@ucsb.edu; Alexander, Jacquelyne; Wong, Garrett; Watkins, Ashley
Subject: AAC Signed Letter to the BOS RE Potential Building Electrification Ordinance, 9-29-22
Attachments: Scan-AAC Signed Letter to the BOS RE Potential Building Electrification Ordinance, 9-29-22.pdf

Categories: Public Comment

Please find the attached letter from the Santa Barbara County Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Regards,



Tashina Sanders
Agricultural Biologist
Agricultural Commissioner's Office
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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

September 29, 2022

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street #406
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

CC: Watkins, Ashley <awatkins@countyofsb.org>; Wong, Garrett <gwong@countyofsb.org>

Re: Potential Building Electrification Ordinance

Dear Chair Hartmann and Board of Supervisors:

On September 8, 2022, the Santa Barbara County Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) discussed the potential development of a Santa Barbara County Building Electrification Ordinance (Ordinance) at the AAC's regularly scheduled meeting. We understand that at this time the Ordinance is still at the preliminary, conceptual direction phase. Nonetheless, it was a topic of significant concern among the cross-section of people engaged in agriculture represented by the AAC. After extensive discussion, the AAC voted unanimously to submit the following letter.

The AAC is concerned that if not thought through carefully, the Ordinance could carry many unintended consequences that would have severe detrimental effects to local agriculture and with respect to agriculture, would only serve to displace issues it is trying to address.

If the Board of Supervisors directs Staff to proceed with the development of this Ordinance, we urge the Board to carefully consider the path, scope, and implementation so as not to undermine the viability of agriculture in Santa Barbara County.

Specifically, the AAC recommends that the Board of Supervisors exempt agriculture from the proposed Ordinance for both new construction and alterations and detailed numerous examples where technologies and fuel types beyond strictly electric are essential to agricultural function and viability in multiple areas throughout the County. Some examples of how agricultural operations utilize natural gas in a primary and backup capacity include: operating backup generators to maintain coolers, operating water pumps on ranches, some wells, forklifts, and wind machines for frost protection. The AAC also discussed examples of agricultural operations within urban boundary areas in the County that rely on a diversity of technologies and fuel types in order to remain viable in Santa Barbara County.

We are further concerned that an outright ban would limit opportunities to develop and implement future advancements in technology, such as renewable biogas, that could represent a meaningful improvement to the serious concern being addressed, without hamstringing local agriculture as an electrification ordinance could. We support efforts to continue to voluntarily innovate and incentivize advances in reliable technology to accomplish our mutual goals of efficiency and responsible resource stewardship in a way that does not debilitate agriculture in Santa Barbara County. Therefore, if the Board does move forward, we encourage strong consideration of

policy pathways that create incentives and allow for mitigation, rather than outright prohibitions, of certain technologies.

The AAC would also like to remind the Board of those living and working in rural and agricultural areas of the County where many residents are already subject to routine electrical outages that can make day to day life very difficult and even unsafe. Because we want to work toward a better quality of life for Santa Barbara County's rural residents, we adamantly oppose developing an Ordinance that exacerbates this outage problem as we believe this Ordinance might.

As a final reminder, please keep in mind that if this Ordinance is not thought through carefully, and thus has unintended consequences that undermine Santa Barbara County agriculture, then instead of meaningfully improving a serious global concern, the Ordinance will instead only serve to displace that concern to other states and countries with fewer environmental and social protections. If that occurs, we all lose.

We appreciate the Board of Supervisors responsiveness to the AAC's comments and urge thoughtful consideration to minimize unintended consequences as outlined in this letter.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Paul Van Leer, Chair

Committee Members

Bradley Miles
Ron Caird
Sharyne Merritt
AJ Cisney
Randy Sharer
Carrie Jordan
Claire Wineman
Paul Van Leer, Chair
June Van Wingerden
Tyler Thomas, Vice Chair
Bill Giorgi, *Alternate*
Chrissy Allen

Representing

1st District Supervisor, Das Williams
2nd District Supervisor, Gregg Hart, Chair
3rd District Supervisor, Joan Hartmann
4th District Supervisor, Peter Adam
5th District Supervisor, Steve Lavagnino
California Women for Agriculture
Grower-Shipper Association of SB and SLO Counties
Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau
Santa Barbara Flower & Nursery Growers' Association
Santa Barbara Vintners
Santa Barbara County Cattlemen's Assn.
California Strawberry Commission