

Katherine Douglas

Public Comment

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From: Brooke Balthaser <brooke@cfrog.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 13, 2025 2:33 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: 5/13 BOS Hearing - Comment for Agenda Item 8
Attachments: 5_13 SB BOS Hearing_ Comment for Agenda Item #8.pdf

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Hello,

I am currently on the zoom link for the Board of Supervisors meeting happening right now. I was unaware that I would be able to have 3 minutes for my comment and instead only had 1 minute, so I was unable to share my entire comment. Please find a PDF file of my comment attached to this email in regard to agenda item #8. Thank you.

Best,
Brooke Balthaser

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Brooke Balthaser (she/her)
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Good afternoon Board of Supervisors,

My name is Brooke Balthaser, and I am the Community Organizing Manager at Climate First: Replacing Oil & Gas, or CFROG. I am also a proud alumni of UC Santa Barbara, and previous resident of the county. I am here today in support of directing staff to develop an oil and gas phase out ordinance for Santa Barbara county.

My journey to finding myself with CFROG begins with my first quarter at UCSB, where I took a course and learned all about the environmental injustices perpetuated by the fossil fuel industry. I learned about the deceptive and dishonest nature of this industry, as they throw millions of dollars toward misinformation campaigns and efforts to manipulate the public – a textbook tactic that we've seen used by other toxic industries like big tobacco. I learned how this industry intentionally destroys communities in the name of lining their shareholders pockets. I learned that this industry has such a poor business model that they expect taxpayers to bear the financial burden of their dirty cost of business. Above all, I learned that this is an industry that consistently puts profit before people, and it is time for this legacy of injustice to come to an end.

Today, I ask that you act differently than the fossil fuel industry. I ask you to put the people of this county before the profits of an industry that would not think twice about polluting the constituents who elected you. I ask you to consider past generations who fought for the vibrant Santa Barbara County that we enjoy today. I ask you to consider future generations and their right to a healthy, safe, and livable future.

A no vote would mean enabling an industry that has shown a complete lack of integrity in their pursuit for profit. You may hear the common industry talking points that this ordinance would kill jobs and increase prices for consumers, but that is simply another one of their deceptive and manipulative tactics. This ordinance would be a step towards accountability and provide a plan for phasing out fossil fuels; a plan that is needed in order to ensure that we manage this phase out in a way that protects jobs and frontline communities so that nobody is left behind. The fossil fuel companies

know that the oil industry is in decline and that they are hitting the bottom of the barrel, yet they have no safety net for their workers for when the day comes that there is no more oil to drill. The decision before you is an opportunity to manage the decline of this industry in a manner that creates more certainty and security for workers and community members as we transition to cleaner, renewable energy sources. Note that an estimated 25,000 jobs could be created to support this phase out.

By voting to direct staff to develop an oil and gas phase out ordinance, we'd see more green jobs, clean energy development, cleaner air and water, healthier communities, protection of wildlife and natural spaces, less wildfire risk, and so much more.

Our communities and environment need protection now more than ever, and we need our elected officials to hear us and stand by us. With that being said, please exercise your authority under AB 3233 and vote yes in support of directing staff to develop this oil and gas ordinance – our future is counting on you.

Thank you,

Brooke Balthaser