



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

April 21, 2025

Mr. Siva Gunda
Vice Chair
California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Vice Chair Gunda,

Thank you for your leadership in protecting consumers and ensuring that California has a safe, affordable and reliable supply of transportation fuels during our energy transition over the next two decades, including through implementation of Senate Bill X1-2 (Skinner, 2023) and Assembly Bill X2-1 (Hart, 2024).

I write to direct you to redouble the State's efforts to work closely with refiners on short- and long-term planning, including through high-level, immediate engagement, to help ensure that Californians continue to have access to a safe, affordable, and reliable supply of transportation fuels, and that refiners continue to see the value in serving the California market, even as demand for fossil fuels continues its gradual decline over the coming decades.

Further, I am directing you, as my Administration's lead representative on this issue, to reinforce the State's openness to a collaborative relationship and our firm belief that Californians can be protected from price spikes and refiners can profitably operate in California – a market where demand for gasoline will still exist for years to come.

Additionally, I am directing you to engage with the Petroleum Strategy Task Force, a cross-agency effort convened by California Natural Resources Agency Secretary Wade Crowfoot and California Environmental Protection Agency Secretary Yana Garcia. That task force is evaluating the State's progress and risks in managing an energy transition in which supply and in-state demand for



petroleum products are both decreasing over the next 20 years. Building on that engagement and the California Energy Commission's (CEC) Transportation Fuels Assessment, I direct you to recommend, by July 1, any changes in the State's approach that are needed to ensure adequate supply during this transition.

As you know, increasingly in recent years, Californians have experienced rapid fluctuations in retail gasoline prices that too often mean abrupt increases followed by a slow and gradual decline, causing families to incur higher costs unexpectedly for everyday needs. The Legislature responded to this growing problem with SBX1-2, which provided the CEC with critical data transparency tools that facilitate real-time market monitoring.

Using this critical new data provided by SBX1-2, the Division of Petroleum Market Oversight (DPMO), in collaboration with the CEC, was able to identify the root causes of the fall 2022 and fall 2023 retail gasoline price spikes: inadequate supply when refineries went offline for maintenance, low inventories that led to supply shortages during unplanned outages, and a volatile spot market that has an outsized influence on the wholesale price of gasoline. These findings led the Legislature to respond by enacting ABX2-1, which provided the CEC with new tools to mitigate price spikes. The data provided by SBX1-2 has also allowed DPMO to inform the public, in real time, when volatile spot market conditions threaten to raise prices at the pump.

While we've made great progress in addressing spikes and irregularities in the gasoline market, refineries across the country and around the world are facing unprecedented uncertainty. The new federal administration has added more uncertainty and instability to the global economy than ever before – with the oil industry on the front lines of this market turmoil. Refineries have been restructuring, transitioning, consolidating, and closing across the country for years. In January, the 700-hundred-acre LyondellBasell refinery in Houston announced its closure as the company transitions to "broader decarbonization and sustainability objectives." California is not immune to this national trend.

California will continue to lead the way in this transition, but it is imperative that we continue to ensure a safe, affordable and reliable supply of transportation fuels over the next two decades. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter on behalf of the State.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom
Governor of California