



**From the Office of the Mayor**

Shelly Higginbotham  
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September 17, 2015

Honorable Planning Commissioners  
San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission  
c/o James A Bergman, Director of Planning and Building  
976 Los Osos Street, Room 200  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

RE: Phillips 66 Santa Maria Refinery Rail Project

As the Mayor of Pismo Beach and many our residents, we have concerns regarding the safety of increased oil trains passing through our city limits en route to the Santa Maria refinery.

The continued increase in the transport of crude by rail combined with recent rail accidents involving oil spills and resulting fires has served to heighten concerns about rail safety, adverse environmental impacts and potential adverse health impacts.

Over the course of 2014 and 2015, personnel from Cal fire San Luis Obispo, who also serve as Pismo Beach's Fire Department and emergency responders have conducted ongoing dialog with the project applicants, environmental consultants, and County staff; formulating mitigation measures to address specs of the project identified as being of "notable concern" culminating in the measures presented in the project's final "Environmental Impact Report".

Furthermore, the League of California Cities has as formal policy, made recommendations to improve rail safety. We understand this area of regulation is largely preempted by federal law, which is why the mayor Pro tem and City Manager of Pismo Beach traveled to Washington, D.C. in March to meet with the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security. Additionally, they met with key staff from the Federal Rail Administration at the Department of Transportation to discuss the issue of rail safety, focusing on ways in which oil transportation may be made safer.

We would like to add our opposition to the proposed project along with the large number of cities citing the 11 class 1 environmental impacts unless those impacts can be mitigated.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shelly Higginbotham".

Shelly Higginbotham  
Mayor

Cc: Pismo Beach City Council  
Cal Fire/Pismo Beach Fire Department  
Cal Fire/San Luis Obispo  
Railroad Commission

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