



SB 559

Ending Offshore Oil Drilling
Senator Dave Min, 37th District

SUMMARY

SB 559 seeks to end offshore oil drilling in state waters by requiring the State Lands Commission (SLC) to finalize negotiations for voluntary relinquishment of oil and gas leases under its jurisdiction in state waters by December 31, 2025.

The bill will impact three offshore oil and gas platforms: Eva, Emmy, and Ester. Platforms Eva and Emmy off Huntington Beach, and Esther off Seal Beach. These three platforms were constructed between 1963 and 1985, have lasted beyond their intended lifespan, and pose a threat to our marine ecosystems, coastal communities, and the state's economy.

BACKGROUND

The SLC has jurisdiction over the state's tidelands and submerged lands. In 1994, in response to the devastating 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill that discharged 100,000 barrels of crude into the waters and onto the beaches of Santa Barbara County, the state enacted legislation to prohibit new oil and gas leases in California state waters. The Legislature found that offshore oil and gas production "poses an unacceptably high risk of damage and disruption to the marine environment of the state". While the 1994 legislation prohibited new leases, existing leases were allowed to continue their oil operations.

In October 2021, an oil spill off the coast of Orange County discharged at least 25,000 gallons and, according to the Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR), the total cost incurred for clean up to date is \$2,813,205. In addition to response costs, OSPR has incurred \$288,644 in Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration costs. It is important to note, that these costs

do not include federal costs associated with the oil spill clean-up.

Additionally, just two months after the Orange County oil spill, a ruptured oil pipeline from Platform Eva off Huntington Beach leaked oil, impacting the Bolsa Chica wetlands.

Offshore oil and gas production in state waters risks damage to marine ecological systems and disruption to coastal economies. Spills along California's coastal waters force the closure of fisheries, beaches and oil sensitive wetlands, as well as stall tourism and kill marine mammals, fish, and birds along California's coast. It is time to end offshore oil drilling in state waters and aide the state in transitioning toward more sustainable resource procurement.

SOLUTION

SB 559 directs the State Lands Commission to end offshore oil drilling in state waters and to begin negotiations for voluntary relinquishment of offshore oil and gas leases in California's state waters by December 31, 2025. If negotiations are not reached by the end of 2025, this bill would require SLC to terminate the leases of oil production in state waters.

SUPPORT

None on file

OPPOSITION

None on file

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