



**Mayor Karen K. Goh**  
City of Bakersfield

July 25, 2023

Governor Gavin Newsom  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento CA 95814

**Re: Roadmap to California's Clean Energy Future**

Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing to you at a time of great uncertainty for the City of Bakersfield and Kern County. The unpredictability that looms over our core industries of agriculture and energy drives this uncertainty. These two industries, on which our community was founded, employ many Bakersfield workers. Jobs from agriculture and energy feed and fuel our national, state, and local economies.

The Central Valley leads as the number one agricultural producer nationwide. Kern County's oil and gas industry provides a vital service to California's economy and its way of life. Our region produces 70% of our state's oil and 76% of the natural gas. The oil and gas industry directly or indirectly employs more than 13,200 County residents. These residents earn an average wage of \$79,244, versus an average of \$53,640 for non-oil and gas workers. Moreover, eight out of the top ten largest County taxpayers are energy companies. The industry provides \$9.2 billion in direct annual revenue to the County's economy.

As the State pursues its energy policies, my community recognizes the need for a "transition" of our workforce. However, suggesting that jobs can seamlessly transition overnight to renewable energy careers such as solar installation is unrealistic. It ignores the rich career opportunities that the oil and gas industry provides our community.

Recently, Aera Energy LLC, headquartered in Bakersfield, laid off approximately 100 employees who rely on steady paychecks from union and family wage jobs for their livelihoods. When you speak of new "green careers," our people fear those careers won't appear in the Central Valley in time to rescue their futures.

Carbon Capture and Sequestration rises as one area where renewable energy jobs will equal oil and gas wages and benefits. We need this work here in Kern County. Bakersfield residents would be a perfect fit for this technology if you make it a priority. I urge you to exert more leadership here, and I am happy to assist you in doing so.

The reality is that while California builds out the infrastructure for an energy transition – California will rely heavily on Kern County to fuel and feed the state's economy. We need the State to create certainty, stability, and cause for investment—rather than causing endless disruption with red tape bureaucracy and lawsuits. California can and should meet our energy demand rather than ceding it to nations with troublesome human rights records.

We all want cleaner air and a sustainable future, but the State's recently adopted policies and lack of investment are hurting the Central Valley and our state's economy as a whole. I invite you to work with local government leaders in acknowledging challenges and crafting workable solutions.

Sincerely,



Karen K. Goh  
Mayor, City of Bakersfield

cc: The Honorable Shannon Grove, Senate District 12  
The Honorable Melissa Hurtado, Senate District 16  
The Honorable Vince Fong, Assembly District 32  
The Honorable Jasmeet Bains, Assembly District 35  
Bakersfield City Councilmembers