

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 8, 2017

Dr. William A. Burke
Chairman
South Coast Air Quality Management
District Governing Board
21865 Copley Drive
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Dear Chairman Burke,

We are writing today to support the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) adoption of the proposed Rule 1410 to ban the use of modified hydrofluoric acid (MHF) and hydrofluoric acid (HF) in the alkylation process at refineries within the SCAQMD's jurisdiction. MHF, if accidentally leaked, will release a ground-hugging fog that could travel several miles in concentrations sufficient to cause death or irreparable injury to those in its path.

As reported by the Torrance Fire Department, the Torrance Refinery, which uses the MHF alkylation process, has experienced more than 20 MHF-related incidents since 2010. The SCAQMD cited the Torrance Refinery's record of several safety mishaps as a major factor in ultimately prompting the agency to propose Rule 1410. Considering the safer alternatives that exist, the Torrance Refinery's use of MHF—along with the Valero refinery in Wilmington, which also uses MHF—unnecessarily puts many of our constituents at serious risk.

Our constituents have voiced strong concerns about the volatility and deadliness of HF and MHF, and they are alarmed that an accidental release of MHF could lead to a catastrophe in the surrounding residential and business areas. MHF alkylation poses a grave public health risk to our constituents, and it is time to end its use.

Under SCAQMD's mission, "SCAQMD is committed to undertaking all necessary steps to protect public health from air pollution, with sensitivity to the impacts of its actions on the community and businesses." This led SCAQMD to vote overwhelmingly to ban the use of HF nearly three decades ago. In this regard, we respectfully request that the Board expedite the rulemaking process and adopt a timely ban on the use of MHF and HF alkylation.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and we look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress