



CELIA ZAVALA
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 383
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-1411 • FAX (213) 620-0636

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

HILDA L. SOLIS

HOLLY J. MITCHELL

SHEILA KUEHL

JANICE HAHN

KATHRYN BARGER

February 22, 2022

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

We are writing to respectfully request that the State take all possible actions to require refineries in California to convert from Modified Hydrofluoric Acid (MHF) to safer alternatives. MHF is a highly toxic chemical, that even if released accidentally in small quantities from refinery operations, could be catastrophic, resulting in severe health effects and mass casualties.

As we near the seventh year anniversary of the Torrance refinery explosion, we are reminded of the life-threatening, catastrophic risk that MHF continues to pose to Los Angeles County residents. There are currently only two refineries, the Torrance and Valero Refineries, in the state of California that continue to use MHF, both of which are located in Los Angeles County.

Unfortunately, explosions, fires, and leaks at refineries are not uncommon. The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) reported a total of ten MHF leaks in the two-year period of 2017 to 2019 at both the Torrance and Valero refineries. Additionally, these refineries are adjacent to underserved communities that already bear a disproportionate pollution burden and have residents who are especially vulnerable to pollution.

Los Angeles County supports common sense steps to reduce the risk and protect our workers and residents. However, current safety measures continue to be insufficient. The use of hydrofluoric acid is regulated by SCAQMD, which conducted an extensive two-year rulemaking process that would have required refineries to convert to safer alternatives. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors supported the SCAQMD's efforts to phase out this toxic substance and encouraged the SCAQMD to expedite its rulemaking process.

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
February 22, 2022
Page 2

The possibility of a catastrophic MHF release from refineries can never be eliminated unless refineries convert to safer commercially available technologies, which several refineries across the country have recently chosen to do. In order to protect residents and public health, it is incumbent upon regulatory agencies to advance the goal of phasing out the use of MHF in Los Angeles County. Therefore, the County respectfully urges the State to pursue all actions to ensure the remaining refineries in California convert from MHF to safer commercially available technologies.

We appreciate your leadership on this important issue.

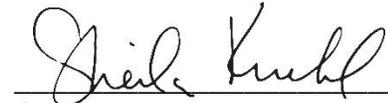
Sincerely,



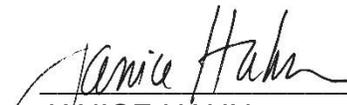
HOLLY J. MITCHELL
Chair of the Board
Supervisor, Second District



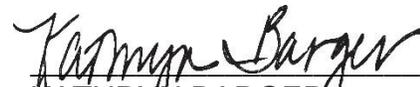
HILDA L. SOLIS
Supervisor, First District



SHEILA KUEHL
Supervisor, Third District



JANICE HAHN
Supervisor, Fourth District



KATHRYN BARGER
Supervisor, Fifth District

c: Los Angeles County Delegation