

11-22-14

To: Mr. Wilson, San Luis Obispo Planning Department

I understand that you have to make a difficult decision on the Phillips 66 Rail Terminal Expansion Project. My wife and I are writing this letter as your decision will impact the security and safety of our home and family in Oakland, California.

Should you approve the expansion project our community will see a massive increase in weekly transportation of dangerously explosive materials through Oakland. I am a retired teacher and the tracks that will be used to move the hundreds of tank cars of oil adjacent to many schools Oakland. Our community has struggled to become more prepared for earthquakes, but it is not prepared for the kind of fires and explosions created by massive oil spills. Your decision will make you responsible for this increase in danger to our home and the many schools and families that will be within the blast zone of the tanker car traffic Phillips wants you to approve.

Over the past year, with a huge increase in the volume of oil being transported by rail, we have seen many folks die from tanker car accidents. You are probably well aware of these accidents and I have no doubt that you don't wish these outcomes. Unfortunately you are being asked to take responsibility for approving a rolling "blast zone" that will imperil many far beyond your own boundaries and your responsibilities must include folks beyond your county alone.

I understand the importance of jobs and not over-regulating some industries, but the oil industry and the transportation of their products have given us great reason to pause. Their safety record is intolerable as there is never a reason to take human life for the soul purpose of getting cheap and dirty resources to a refinery. This is exactly what they are asking you to agree to; they want your approval to jeopardize many to make more money. The oil companies are flush with profits and the restriction of their business due to their lack of safety in transportation of their product is not a danger to the jobs I'm sure you want to protect.

There are other things to reflect on before deciding:

The refining of products from Canadian Tar Sands are not only dangerous explosion and fire hazards to the safety of our communities but vastly increase the production of greenhouse gases. This is a real issue to all California communities presently struggling during our drought.

The EIR information given by Phillips 66 is "cooked" designed to minimize the appearance of safety issues in the transportation of the crude product. The most recent year shows a clear and dangerous trend of larger and more life-threatening spills.

The EIR information given by Phillips suggests an example of a six car spill when the most recent experience we have is that many more cars have spilled in derailments. The potential fire and explosion from these tank car trains is far greater than presented in the Phillips EIR.

Phillips is putting your planning commission in a position where you can do great harm or great good to areas that extend throughout California and beyond. By refusing this permit you will substantially have created a safer community for your own citizens and for those, like my wife and I, who live beyond your immediate area of concern.

I walked the main tracks that the Phillips oil would transit yesterday and as I traveled I saw all the schools, homes and businesses that would face the horrifying risk associated with the oil trains Phillips would need if you approve their permit. The potential blast created by these trains is not worth the incremental increase in immense profits gathered by the oil companies, Phillips included. This permit creates a very real risk and I'm sure you would not want the responsibility of trying to explain to folks in Oakland why you allowed this transport should a catastrophe occur.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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