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# California State Legislature

SENATOR  
**HANNAH-BETH JACKSON**

NINETEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



CHAIR  
SENATE JUDICIARY  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON WOMEN,  
WORK & FAMILIES

VICE CHAIR  
JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

COMMITTEES  
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& RETIREMENT  
NATURAL RESOURCES & WATER  
PUBLIC SAFETY  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
CALIFORNIA'S WINE INDUSTRY

Chair E. Joaquin Esquivel and Board Members  
State Water Resources Control Board  
P.O. Box 100  
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100

Dear Chair Esquivel and Board Members:

As Senator of the 19<sup>th</sup> District, I request that State Water Resources Control Board comprehensively review the application for an aquifer exemption in the Cat Canyon Oil Field in Santa Barbara County, California. Additionally, I urge the Board not to proceed with any review until results from the United States Geological Survey's current study of possible groundwater contamination in the Cat Canyon Oil Field are released and then assessed by the board for inclusion into its review of the application.

The Board must act in accordance with its mission to preserve and enhance the quality of Californians' drinking water to protect public health and the environment upon consideration of this Application. Local communities surrounding Cat Canyon, including Sisquoc and Los Alamos, entirely rely on groundwater for clean drinking water. Yet, parts of the Cat Canyon Oil Field are already ranked among the top 1% for groundwater threats, heightening concerns about further degradation of groundwater if this aquifer exemption is approved.

In making a decision on this Application, I implore the Board to also consider that the exemption requested by oil operators from federal drinking water protections is tied to the massive expansion of oil and gas operations in the Field. Two operators are currently proposing to drill around 500 new wells directly through the groundwater basin in Cat Canyon, using risky steam injection techniques to extract the oil. The projects need this aquifer exemption to proceed forward at the proposed scale, which would triple the County of Santa Barbara's current onshore oil production. The decision on the Application must not be rushed or made without sufficient consideration to these factors, especially since no environmental review is conducted on the Application at either the State or federal level.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. I urge the Board to consider the health and safety of the communities that will be disproportionately impacted should this Application proceed forward as proposed.

If there are any questions or if you need more information, please feel free to contact my District Representative, Sophie Fox, in my Santa Barbara District Office at 805-965-0862.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hannah-Beth Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'n'.

HANNAH-BETH JACKSON

Senator, 19th District