



California Interfaith Power & Light

NEWS RELEASE

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California Faith Community Applauds Newsom's Commitment to 3,200 Foot Safety Setbacks

The announcement comes after multi-year campaign by climate justice, public health, and faith communities

WILMINGTON, Calif., 2021— California Interfaith Power & Light (CIPL) and faith advocates celebrated today with the announcement of a draft rule by the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) of a statewide 3,200-foot health and safety setback between new oil and gas extraction sites and sensitive receptors such as schools, homes, and recreational areas. The 3,200 feet would represent the largest setback declared anywhere in the U.S.

This announcement comes on the heels of a near-decade campaign by climate justice, public health, and faith organizations. Multiple studies have shown a direct link between pollutants from oil and gas drilling, such as benzene and hydrochloric acid, to adverse medical conditions, including asthma, cardiac and respiratory illnesses, and cancer. California Interfaith Power & Light and allies have fought for legislation that reduces these risks for years, and are part of the Voices in Solidarity Against Oil in Neighborhoods (VISION) Coalition, which has led a campaign for a health and safety setback ordinance. CalGEM has received an unprecedented amount of public comments supporting such setbacks in the last two years.

“Frontline communities have lived with the dangerous health effects of oil and gas drilling for too long”, states Rev. Louis Chase of Holman United Methodist Church in Los Angeles, and leader in Standing Together Against Neighborhood Drilling (STAND-LA.) “Our coalition looks forward to being intimately involved in strengthening the draft to ensure the transformation of sacrifice zones, and uplifting human health over fossil fuel profits.”

“The governor’s announcement today legitimizes the lived experience of frontline communities in terms of real health effects,” says Allis Druffel, Southern California Director of CIPL. “Addressing this injustice will also tackle related issues such as the need to expand renewable energy, and the just transition of fossil fuel workers into well-paying clean energy jobs.”

California Interfaith Power & Light and faith supporters remain committed to strengthening the setbacks draft rule, as well as state legislation that protects public health, increases renewable energy, and increases clean energy jobs, especially for former fossil fuel workers and residents of under-served communities.
