August 17, 2026

Assemblymember Gregg Hart
1021 O Street, Suite 6230
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Henry Stern
1021 O St., Suite 7710
Sacramento, CA 95814

Submitted via Legislative Portal

RE: AB 1448 (Hart) – OPPOSE

Dear Assemblymember Hart and Senator Stern:

On behalf of NARO-California and the hundreds of thousands of Californians who own oil and gas mineral and royalty interests, we respectfully write in opposition to AB 1448.

California is already facing serious challenges involving energy affordability, refinery capacity, domestic production, and growing dependence on petroleum produced outside our state. AB 1448 would move California further in the wrong direction by creating additional obstacles to the responsible production and transportation of domestic energy resources.

NARO-California advocates for the interests of California's oil and gas mineral and royalty owners. These Californians include farmers, ranchers, retirees living on fixed incomes, small business owners, families, students, and nonprofit organizations. For many royalty owners, domestic energy production represents not merely an abstract policy question, but income, property rights, and economic security.

California Needs More Reliable Domestic Energy, Not Additional Obstacles

AB 1448 would impose additional restrictions and requirements affecting offshore oil and gas infrastructure, lease assignments, and infrastructure associated with Pacific Outer Continental Shelf production.

These restrictions come at precisely the wrong time.

California consumers already pay some of the highest fuel prices in the nation, while refinery closures and declining in-state production threaten to make California increasingly dependent upon petroleum and refined products imported from elsewhere.

California cannot regulate away its demand for petroleum by restricting its domestic production.

Petroleum remains essential not only for transportation fuels, but also for countless products Californians use every day, including medical products, tires, electronics, clothing, construction materials, agricultural products, and consumer goods.

Even as California explores new energy technologies, petroleum will remain an essential component of the state's economy and modern life for the foreseeable future.

Importing Petroleum Does Not Eliminate Its Environmental Impact

AB 1448 also raises an important environmental question that deserves greater consideration.

When California restricts production while continuing to consume petroleum, the result is not necessarily reduced petroleum consumption. Increasingly, it means obtaining petroleum from somewhere else.

That can shift production to jurisdictions with environmental, labor, and regulatory standards that are less stringent than California's, while adding transportation requirements and increasing California's exposure to international supply disruptions.

California already maintains among the nation's most stringent environmental and operational requirements for oil and gas production. If petroleum will continue to be consumed here, producing an appropriate share of that energy under California's rigorous environmental standards should be considered preferable to increasing our dependence upon production elsewhere.

Modernization Should Be Encouraged, Not Obstructed

AB 1448 is also counterproductive insofar as it creates additional obstacles to the assignment, modification, renewal, and operation of existing infrastructure.

California should encourage responsible investment in modernizing energy infrastructure and maintaining it to high environmental and safety standards.

Creating additional regulatory uncertainty can instead discourage investment, complicate transfers to capable operators, and make modernization more difficult.

The appropriate policy objective should be straightforward: ensure that operators are financially and technically capable, require compliance with strong environmental and safety standards, and allow responsible infrastructure to operate.

California's Energy Policy Must Account for Affordability

California families ultimately bear the consequences of energy policy.

Higher transportation and energy costs do not remain confined to the oil and gas industry. They increase the cost of commuting, agriculture, construction, manufacturing, shipping, food, and virtually every product transported within the state.

These burdens are particularly difficult for working families, retirees, rural residents, and others who have limited ability to absorb higher costs or rapidly change how they travel and work.

At a time when affordability has become one of California's most serious challenges, policymakers should be pursuing greater energy reliability, increased domestic supply, modernized infrastructure, and lower costs.

AB 1448 instead continues a regulatory approach that has contributed to declining domestic production and increasing dependence on energy produced elsewhere.

A Better Approach

NARO-California believes California should pursue an energy policy based on reliability, affordability, environmental responsibility, and respect for property rights.

That means encouraging responsible California energy production, modernizing existing infrastructure, maintaining strong and reasonable environmental safeguards, and removing unnecessary government-imposed barriers to investment and production.

California can protect its environment without exporting production, jobs, economic activity, and environmental impacts to other jurisdictions.

For these reasons, NARO-California respectfully opposes AB 1448 and urges the Legislature to reject the measure.

We invite you and your staff to visit **www.NARO-CA.org** to learn more about oil and gas mineral and royalty owners and our vital contributions to California communities.

NARO-California would welcome the opportunity to serve as a resource as the Legislature considers policies affecting California's energy future, mineral and royalty owners, and the affordability and reliability of our energy supply.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric S. Eisenhammer
Director of Public Affairs & Public Relations
NARO-California

Edward S. Hazard
President
NARO-California