August 28, 2020

The Honorable Al Muratsuchi  
California State Assembly, 66th District  
State Capitol, Room 2179  
Sacramento, CA 95814  

Re: AB 345 (Muratsuchi) – Natural resources: environmental justice: oil and gas: regulation of operations  

City of Beverly Hills – Support  

Dear Assembly Member Muratsuchi,  

On behalf of the City of Beverly Hills, I am pleased to write to you in SUPPORT of your AB 345 which will require the establishment of an environmental justice program at the Natural Resources Agency, and require the Geologic Energy Management Division to adopt regulations to protect public health and safety near oil and gas extraction facilities.  

According to a 2014 report by the Natural Resources Defense Council, over 5.4 million Californians live within one mile of one or more oil and gas wells. More than one third of these people live in areas considered to be the most burdened by environmental pollution based upon the results of the state’s screening tool, CalEnviroscreen. In addition, of those at risk, over 90 percent are people of color.  

There are approximately 100,000 – 105,000 oil and gas wells in the state which are present in more than half of the state’s counties. Los Angeles County’s annual oil and gas production is second only to Kern County, and several other counties – including Ventura, Orange, Fresno, and Monterey, among others – also account for significant amounts of annual oil and gas production.  

The City of Beverly Hills has been a leader in pushing for increased protections against the adverse effects caused by oil and gas extraction. In 2011, the Beverly Hills City Council voted to prohibit oil extraction in the City by 2017. In 2014, Beverly Hills went even further and became the first city in the state to ban fracking. AB 345 will help ensure that California’s oil and gas production is done at a safe distance from sensitive sites and will protect the health and safety of Californians.
For these reasons, the City of Beverly Hills is pleased to SUPPORT your AB 345. Thank you for authoring this important measure.

Sincerely,

Lester J. Friedman
Mayor, City of Beverly Hills

cc: Members and Consultants, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
The Honorable Ben Allen, 26th Senate District
The Honorable Richard Bloom, 50th Assembly District
Andrew K. Antwi, Shaw Yoder Antwi Schmelzer & Lange