

# PRESS RELEASE

Assemblymember **PEDRO NAVA**



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 13, 2010

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## **Risks of Oil Drilling Probed at Investigative Hearing in Culver City**

*Los Angeles Basin & Baldwin Hills to be Highlighted*

**(Culver City)** In the wake of the tragedy and continuing environmental catastrophe unfolding off the Coast of Louisiana, **Culver City will host the** California Assembly Committee on Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials **on Friday, May 14, at City Hall, from 1 pm to 4pm.**

The Committee, chaired by Assemblymember Pedro Nava (D-Santa Barbara), will conduct an investigative hearing regarding oil drilling operations in the Baldwin Hills area of Los Angeles by Plains Exploration and Production Company (XP) and the risks associated with oil drilling to residents throughout the region. This hearing will also include an examination of the regulatory agencies responsible for insuring that oil production facilities do not pose a public health or environmental hazards. Regulators, community representatives, and members of the oil industry and environmental groups are expected to testify. (See Agenda Attached Below)

"The oil industry has been cited for hundreds of incidents in the Los Angeles basin during the last several years that have harmed residents and the environment. We have a responsibility to make sure that people are safe in their neighborhoods," said Nava. "On-shore and offshore oil drilling are extremely dangerous and it is imperative that the necessary safeguards and oversight exists, whether it is Baldwin Hills and Hermosa Beach in Los Angeles County or Santa Barbara (the proposed location of the first new drilling in California Sanctuary Act waters in 41 years). It is imperative that the public is protected."

The Committee's investigation has already found more than 125 air quality violations in the Los Angeles basin by the oil drilling industry throughout the past five years. This includes numerous violations by XP in Baldwin Hills, including one incident where residents had to evacuate their neighborhoods.

**WHO:** Assemblymember Pedro Nava, Chairman  
Assembly Committee on Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials

**Witnesses include:**

Culver City Councilmember Andrew Weissman  
Representatives from regulators, industry and environmental groups

**WHAT:** Assembly Committee Hearing on Oil Drilling Hazards in Culver City

**WHERE:** Culver City Council Chambers  
9770 Culver Boulevard  
Culver City, CA

**WHEN:** Friday, May 14, 2010, 1-4 p.m.

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Said Culver Councilmember Andrew Weissman, "The City of Culver City welcomes the State Assembly Committee on Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials, chaired by Assembly member Pedro Nava, to our community and appreciates the Committee's leadership in conducting the Oversight Hearing on Environmental Hazards of Oil Drilling and Production in the Baldwin Hills/Inglewood Oil Fields. In 2006, the City had to respond to two releases of pressurized gas, which forced residents who were overcome by noxious fumes to leave their homes. In 2008, an oil pipeline spill flowed into storm drains leading to Ballona Creek, which empties directly into the Santa Monica Bay. The City has been working with Los Angeles County to develop adequate safeguards for the Baldwin Hills/Inglewood Oil Fields, which is located in a heavily populated area. However, even more can be done with the State's help."

**The hearing will examine the following issues:**

- How do state and local agencies with regulatory responsibility assess the public health and environmental hazards associated with oil drilling and production in the Baldwin Hills oil fields?
- In the case of oil production facilities in heavily urbanized areas, are there identifiable special risks to local communities and does the current regulatory system reflect the level of risk in these urban settings?
- Do the current regulatory agencies have the technical expertise to insure public health protections from toxic air emissions?

**Agenda:**

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND TOXIC MATERIALS**

**Oversight Hearing on Environmental Hazards of Oil Drilling and Production in the Baldwin Hills/Inglewood Oil Fields & The Los Angeles Basin**

City Hall  
9770 Culver Boulevard  
Culver City  
*Working Agenda*

**Introduction (1:00-1:15)**

Assemblyman Pedro Nava  
Welcome – City of Culver City

**City of Culver City (1:15- 1:30)**

City Council Member Andrew Weissman

**California Department of Conservation (1:30- 2:00)**

Bridgett Luther, Director  
Elena Miller - State Oil & Gas Supervisor

**Panel One- Community Organizations (2:00 – 3:00)**

Lark Galloway-Gilliam- Community Health Councils, Inc.  
Robert Garcia- The City Project  
Damon Nagami- Natural Resource Defense Council  
John Kuechle- Baldwin Hills Community Standards District Community Advisory Panel

**Panel Two- Homeowners (2:30 – 3:00)**

Gary Gless, Windsor Hills  
Mary Ann Greene, Blair Hills  
Ken Kutcher, Culver Crest Neighborhood Association  
Irma Muñoz, Baldwin Vista

**Public Testimony (3:00- 4:00)**  
Limited to 3 minutes per witness

**Adjournment 4:00**