



California Independent Oil Marketers Association
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April 5, 2007

Kern County Planning Department
2700 M Street, Suite 100
Bakersfield, California 93301
(sent via fax to 661-862-8601)

Subject: Support for Big West Refinery Expansion Project

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the California Independent Oil Marketers Association (CIOMA) we wish to register our *strong support* for the Big West refinery expansion project. As you may be aware, CIOMA was a key proponent of keeping the Big West refinery open and operating, when Shell announced that it intended to shut the facility down. As a result of our involvement Shell sold the refinery to Big West and it has remained a viable and crucial element in California's fuel supply.

California has a fuel supply crisis, as evidenced by our 25 cent-higher-than-national-average fuel prices. No new refinery has been built here since the mid-Sixties and yet the state's population, and fuel demand, has increased steadily since then. The only hope for the California fuel-consuming public is to increase the capacity of this state's existing refineries. The Big West project is exactly a step in the right direction.

More importantly to our members, Big West is a key supply location for unbranded gasoline and diesel - which is critical to small, independent fuel wholesalers and retailers. And it is an extremely important supplier of diesel for farmers in the lower San Joaquin Valley. The ability for Big West to make needed refinery improvements is absolutely crucial not only to state fuel supplies, but to insure adequate supplies of fuel for your local economy.

We are confident that Big West will meet the myriad of health, safety and environmental requirements inherent in doing business in California. So any questions of refinery safety should be met by them meeting the host of conditions that will be placed on its permits. And, with refinery improvement comes environmental improvement since new, more efficient, less polluting apparatus and systems will replace the outdated equipment.

This project is a win-win proposition for your locality, and for the state. *Please convey our strong support for this project to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.*

CIOMA represents independent marketers who purchase gasoline and other petroleum products from refiners and sell the products to independent gasoline retailers, businesses, and government agencies, as well as representing branded "jobbers" who supply branded retail outlets, especially in rural areas. Our members are primarily small, family owned businesses who encounter unique difficulties in meeting California's complex and

increasingly expensive environmental requirements. We represent approximately 400 members, about half of whom are actively engaged in the marketing and distribution of petroleum products and fuels.

Should you have any questions or wish to obtain additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay McKeeman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Jay McKeeman,
Vice President of Government Relations and Communications

Cc: Kern County Board of Supervisors
Jon McQuiston - District 1
Don Maben, Chairman - District 2
Mike Maggard - District 3
Ray Watson - District 4
Michael J. Rubio - District 5

CIOMA Board of Directors