



MIKE BONIN

City of Los Angeles
Councilmember, Eleventh District

August 6, 2019

Dr. William A. Burke
Chairman
South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)
21865 Copley Dr.
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Dear Chairman Burke:

I write to express my strong support for the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) adoption of the proposed Rule 1410 to ban the use of modified hydrofluoric acid (MHF) and hydrofluoric acid (HF) at refineries within SCAQMD's jurisdiction. These toxic chemicals pose grave threats to neighboring communities, including those I represent in Los Angeles City Council District 11.

SCAQMD reports that MHF and HF leaks occur with alarming frequency and pose a great risk to the health and livelihood of the millions of residents who live within a few miles of the Torrance and Valero Refineries in Southern California. On February 18, 2015, an explosion in the Electrostatic Precipitator unit at the Torrance ExxonMobil Refinery shook the community and could have released 50,000 pounds of volatile and toxic MHF into the air. This information was not made public at the time and only came to light because of a CBS Evening News expose in September of that year.

HF and MHF form a ground-hugging dense vapor HF cloud upon release. This dense cloud of toxic gas would travel with the wind for miles, possibly posing grave risks to my constituents. With even minimal exposure, HF causes painful, slow-healing chemical burns and damages internal organs and bones. In a worst-case scenario, it could cause asphyxiation from respiratory problems upon inhalation, as well as permanent organ damage.

My constituents have voiced concerns about the threat MHF and HF pose to the public health and environmental safety of our communities. As our communities begin to reckon with the realities of climate change and the fragility of our environment, we must adapt our technologies to ensure a better future for the generations to come. The Southern California region has been unnecessarily put at risk for too long and it is time to act with urgency.

I respect the decision of the SCAQMD to expedite the rulemaking process and potentially adopt a ban on the use of HF and MHF. Thank you for your consideration; I look forward to working together to ensure a safe and healthy future for our neighborhoods.

Regards,



MIKE BONIN

Los Angeles City Councilmember, 11th District

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