

1 **VENTURA COMPRESSOR STATION MODERNIZATION PROJECT**
2 **March 11, 2025 Scoping Meeting Transcript**
3 **From: Recording.transcript.vtt (edited for clarity)**
4

5 **Brewster Birdsall:** Hello, everyone I see about 14 or 15 or 20 participants on this Zoom call. My name is
6 Brewster Birdsall. I'll wait a few minutes before we begin the presentation just to see if a couple of
7 other folks like to join in on the webinar. So I'll just count down a minute or 2, and then I'll start a
8 presentation. Thanks.

9 I see a good number of attendees filing in, up to about 28. I think I'll begin and go through
10 some slides. I'd like to just start off by saying good evening and welcome to the Virtual Scoping
11 Meeting for the Ventura Compressor Modernization Project. This meeting is being directed by the
12 California Public Utilities Commission staff. This is a public meeting for all people interested in the
13 Ventura Compressor Modernization Project. Today is March 11th, 2025. We are holding this virtual
14 meeting on the Zoom platform.

15 Couple of important notes I want to say, right up – one, the meeting is being recorded for use
16 by the agency during the proceeding for the project, and the presentation itself will be available
17 online at the California Public Utilities Commission website for this project shortly after tonight's
18 meeting. Another important, very important update upfront is to ensure the most robust public
19 engagement and outreach, I want to let you all know that the CPUC is now planning to hold another
20 similar meeting in the City of Ventura in the coming weeks. The date and time and location of that
21 meeting has not yet been decided but this would be a scoping meeting of a of a very similar format
22 to what we have here online. It will be in-person and I plan to be there and some of the other CPUC
23 staff and consultants would be there as well. And in order to give us time to plan that meeting, the
24 scoping period itself will be extended to close at a later date, and the date is still to be determined.
25 My point is, all individuals with emails on record will be notified of the in-person meeting, date and
26 location and the extension when those details are finalized. And I can talk a little bit more about this
27 later on in the presentation.

28 So I'm going to move right along and jump to our next slide. I have some overall guidelines
29 about this virtual meeting format. I expect that the presentation will last about 20 minutes and
30 during the presentation, you may write in the chat window, and these notes will become part of the
31 recording. But if you want to make a written comment on the project, please use the project email
32 address that's shown on this website, on this page and also on the project website. This is
33 vcm_ceqa@aspeneg.com. Excuse me.

34 In the Zoom format, the meeting will mute the participants lines until it is time for a public
35 comment period, and that will be at the end of the presentation, like, I say, about 20 minutes long.
36 And at the end of the meeting we'll ask you to raise your hand in the Zoom app, or press certain
37 buttons on your phone if you would like to speak.

38 So advancing on to the agenda, here's the flow of tonight's meeting. Again, I expect our
39 presentation to take about 20 minutes, and then a period of public comment will follow the
40 presentation. This shows the basic steps, and I'm ready to move to the next slide.

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1 This slide of introductions is to show you who we are and who do we represent and I'll try to
2 avoid using acronyms but some abbreviations do appear throughout the slides.

3 The scoping meeting is being directed by the staff at the Public Utilities Commission, and John
4 Forsyth is our project manager at the California Public Utilities Commission. The CPUC is the State
5 Regulator responsible for safe and reliable utility service at reasonable rates and for this project the
6 utility under review is the natural gas provider, Southern California Gas Company.

7 My name, as I mentioned in the beginning, is Brewster Birdsall and I am a project manager at
8 Aspen Environmental Group and the CPUC hired Aspen to prepare an environmental review that is
9 compliant with the California Environmental Quality Act, known as CEQA.

10 Grace Weeks is also here from Aspen helping facilitate the meeting and Aspen Environmental
11 Group will prepare an environmental impact report or EIR for the CPUC to use in reviewing this
12 project. The project applicant is SoCalGas. The applicant is seeking CPUC approval to construct and
13 operate the Ventura Compressor Modernization Project. The formal application was filed in August
14 2023 and supplemental information came in later to make it complete in late of 2024.

15 Thanks for advancing the slides. The overall purpose of the meeting is to give you information
16 on the process that CPUC must follow in developing this environmental impact report. The scoping
17 process allows us to hear your ideas on the scope and content of the environmental review and for
18 us to hear your issues of concern. Next.

19 What is scoping? When scoping meetings are required for projects that are of statewide or
20 regional significance, as this one is, later, we will give you direction on how to file your comments
21 on the scope and content of the environmental impact report that we are preparing and your
22 comments can help the CPUC identify environmental effects and possibly ways to mitigate the
23 effects, including alternatives to the project or mitigation measures as well.

24 So moving on to the overall process that we are sitting within, the applicant must follow certain
25 steps before the CPUC will decide to approve the new infrastructure and the environmental impact
26 report will be one of many considerations within the discretionary decision of approving or
27 disapproving the new infrastructure. Next slide shows an overview of the CEQA or California
28 Environmental Quality Act process and requirements, and our goal is to provide a written analysis
29 that is compliant with the requirements of CEQA.

30 The spirit of CEQA really centers on disclosure. Our audience is you, the public and the agency
31 decision makers and the environmental impact report will provide information on possible
32 environmental damage and how to avoid it. The law requires us to focus on how the project may
33 cause a direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

34 Moving on, the process of preparing an environmental impact report follows certain
35 predictable steps that sometimes take a year or more to fully complete and scoping is one of the
36 early steps. And the input we receive will help to shape the content of this environmental impact
37 report. After the draft environmental impact report becomes available, another round of public
38 review and public comment will occur – shown in that darker green box. We are here in the light
39 green area.

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1 Okay, moving on to some of the important parts of the CEQA analysis. The environmental
2 impact report must include some mandatory components. One of the most important is the project
3 description. Our an analysis of environmental impacts will focus on these activities as they appear in
4 the project description, including the long-term maintenance and use of the facility over the life of
5 the project. The analysis will also describe how these activities may cause physical changes to the
6 environment including the site and its environment.

7 So moving on, I'll go into a little bit of the project itself, and the site of the project is an existing
8 natural gas compressor station. The site is zoned industrial, however, the site itself is adjacent to
9 sensitive land uses, including residential areas and the EP Foster Elementary School. This mix of land
10 uses makes the project challenging.

11 Here's the next slide. We can go on to one of these main issues. The California Public Utilities
12 Commission has what's called the Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan. The project site
13 here is located in a disadvantaged community which is a designation defined by the California
14 Environmental Protection Agency and when making its decision on this project, the CPUC will
15 consider whether the project is consistent with the goals of the CPUC's Environmental and Social
16 Justice Action Plan, adopted in 2022.

17 Now although environmental justice is not a topic in the consideration of environmental effects
18 under CEQA, the EIR will disclose the CPUC's procedures for consideration of environmental and
19 social justice in the overall decision-making process.

20 Next slide. This slide shows an overview of the different equipment that SoCalGas proposes to
21 construct and operate at the site. The project entails modernization of the Ventura Compressor
22 Station and in summary SoCalGas would upgrade the existing compressor station to modernize and
23 improve the reliability of this portion of California's natural gas transmission system, which extends
24 from the Ventura Compressor Station all the way through Santa Barbara, up the coast to Goleta and
25 to the north as far as communities around San Luis Obispo and Paso Robles.

26 The project would replace 3 older natural gas driven compressors with a new hybrid
27 configuration, composed of 2 electric and 2 gas driven compressors. The applicant, SoCalGas,
28 articulates its purpose and need for the project within their general application, which is available at
29 the CPUC website. For the following slides, I will quickly show some ground level views of the
30 existing site. Folks in the community, I'm sure, will be familiar.

31 First up is a view of the site along North Olive Street. The project would retain the fence along
32 North Olive Street, and new structures would become visible (next slide) along McFarlane, the
33 perimeter fence would remain the same. Again, new or taller structures would become visible. Next
34 is a quick view on an angle that shows the site from North Olive Street, facing more in a southwest
35 direction, and here this is an angle that shows the existing tan blowdown stack. It's partially
36 obscured by the fence to the right of the center, but the project would add a taller blowdown stack.

37 Another image, this time from the other direction on the Ventura River side of the site, over
38 the chain link fence, the exhaust stacks of the 3 existing compressor engines will appear just over
39 that that chain link fence on the left of this picture and you'll have a chance to look more closely at

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1 these pictures in the presentation when it's online. And also these pictures do come originally from
2 southern California gas companies application material which is also available on the project
3 website. Final view here of the environs is from the Ridgeline Trail at Grant Park, south of the site
4 looking more towards the north, the northwest, excuse me, and this just shows the general mix of
5 land uses in the area.

6 Final image is an aerial rendering of the conceptual site plan in the proposal, and the project
7 would add larger structures, including the new compressor building mainly along the western edge
8 of the site. The project would remove the existing compressor building which is on the northern
9 edge of the site.

10 Okay, thanks. Moving into some of the components of the environmental impact report, the
11 environmental impact report will include various chapters broken up into topic areas and the range
12 of topic areas, you can see here on this slide, will be comprehensive and this is common for an
13 environmental impact report. Moving to the next slide. The flow of each of the chapters in the EIR
14 would follow this general outline which describes the environmental setting for the project and the
15 regulatory framework that the project sits within, and then goes on to describe the significance of
16 the project effects on the environment and identification of mitigation or alternatives that may
17 avoid those impacts.

18 Next slide is a quick overview of alternatives. An important consideration is that the scope of
19 the EIR, and any EIR really, must include a range of alternatives. The range of alternatives, it is,
20 however, limited to those that meet most of the basic project objectives. So the project objectives
21 have a great importance in how alternatives are selected. The project objectives are specifically
22 articulated by the project applicant. On the next slide I have, well, on next 2 slides, we have an
23 overview of the project objectives. So here we have, this is the first of 2 slides of project objectives
24 articulated by SoCalGas. The CPUC must keep these objectives in mind when reviewing the possible
25 alternatives to the project.

26 As I mentioned earlier, any alternatives to the project that are carried forward for full analysis
27 must meet most of the basic project objectives, and on this first slide you may notice that SoCalGas
28 emphasizes reliably serving the north coastal portion of their system, that that geography of
29 multiple counties that I mentioned a moment ago. And this range of objectives here on the first
30 slide also includes moving gas into the Lagolita underground storage field. The second slide of
31 objectives here shows also that the company has an interest in reducing the levels of air pollutant
32 emissions from the from the facility, and also in completing the modernization in a timely manner.

33 So to talk a little bit more about alternatives that may satisfy the project objectives, the CPUC
34 will be actively exploring and comparing alternatives within the environmental impact report. The
35 reasonable range of alternatives could include alternative technologies and even a complete
36 relocation of the facility to an alternative site. Now, the environmental impact report must also
37 include an analysis of the No Project Alternative and that describes what could be reasonably
38 expected to occur, in the foreseeable future, if the project is not approved at all.

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1 Now, moving on to the conclusion of my short presentation. I want to point out that this slide
2 will show, and it is showing a sequence of next steps, deliberately highlighted in an obnoxious color.
3 I want to reiterate what we noted up front, which is that the CPUC is planning to hold another
4 similar meeting in-person in the City of Ventura. Now the meeting, date and location are not yet set
5 and the date and location will be announced to all people on the email list and also posted on the
6 CPUC website for this project. At that meeting, we will also ensure that Spanish materials are
7 available and that a Spanish translator will be available for the meeting. Additional time will also be
8 added to the scoping period so the slide here shows that March 31st or April 1st would mark the
9 end of a 30-day scoping period. Scoping comments will be accepted later as I mentioned just a
10 moment ago, they will be accepted until a time after the in-person meeting that has yet to be
11 scheduled. So I hope that's clear and I hope that that helps to provide folks on the line a little bit of
12 an assurance that scoping is not being moved ahead hastily. Of course, we would encourage you to
13 email your scoping comments earlier rather than later if you have them available.

14 So I'll move to the next slide which is specifically how to submit a scoping comment. And the
15 best way is to email your comments to the address shown here, which is vcm_ceqa@aspenerg.com
16 and when you file your comments, you should include your name and your organization, a mailing
17 address and email address for, to be sure that you receive future notifications and the public
18 comments will become part of the public record, and be published with the EIR in a scoping report.
19 Again here want to just reiterate that the scoping period will be extended to a date to be
20 determined. So this concludes my 20 minute presentation.

21 I want to transition to a period where we will open the mic, and I want to take a look at the
22 Zoom app here to see how the participants are looking. This part of our Zoom presentation or our
23 Zoom webinar will allow you to speak up and provide your public comments at this point in an open
24 format. A couple of discussion guidelines here, to please be concise with your comments, try to stay
25 on topic. We're here to talk about the scope and content of the environmental impact report that is
26 to come and respect other's opinions to keep things civil, and bear in mind that the comments as
27 this entire Zoom meeting is being recorded.

28 As I mentioned a moment ago, we encourage that comments be filed by email. That way, we
29 can easily keep track of things, and you may have a chance to better articulate your points there. So
30 to speak today, you would want to raise your hand in the Zoom app and moving here to the next
31 slide (yep), we decided to allocate 2 minutes to folks who would like to speak up, and I see some
32 hands being raised right now, which is great. I think that what will happen is as we count through
33 the hands that are raised, your mic will be unmuted and you'll have a chance to address all who are
34 listening and I mentioned in the beginning, we have staff online from the California Public Utilities
35 Commission, including John Forsyth, our project manager and also online are, of course,
36 representatives from Southern California Gas Company. This is really a comment period, however,
37 so we encourage you to provide your thoughts, and we'll be listening.

38 **Grace Weeks:** Hello! So I will be the one unmuting you, so I will allow you to talk and then you have to
39 unmute yourself. So on telephone, you will dial *9 to request to raise your hand and then *6 to
40 unmute yourself when asked. So on the phone number, I'll shout out the last 4 digits and then for

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1 people who are signed in online, I'll say your name. I'm sorry if I mispronounce it in advance. I'll
2 allow you to talk, you unmute yourself and then you have 2 minutes so we'd also like you to state
3 your first and last name, although it's on here on Zoom for the people calling in, we'd like that for
4 the record. So Zoom keeps these in order so I'll just go from the top. Lane McCabe, I'm going allow
5 you to talk. Please unmute yourself.

6 **Lane McCabe:** Hello! My name is Lane McCabe. I live in Ventura and I work at the after school program
7 in EP Foster. My role includes supporting the student's educational growth as well as improving
8 their social development and their character. But the most important part of my job is to keep them
9 safe. I am deeply concerned about the potential expansion of the gas compressor, and I fear it could
10 put the health and safety of the children, myself and the other staff at risk.

11 I've worked at various school sites throughout Ventura, but one of the first things that I noticed
12 when I moved to EP Foster was that a large percentage of students suffer from asthma. I've also
13 noticed that the children at EP Foster tend to be sicker for longer, and they're sicker more often.

14 I'm not a medical professional but after various schools in Ventura, it's clear to me that the
15 health of the students at EP Foster is being negatively impacted. The main difference, I've noticed, is
16 the children are breathing in the toxic chemicals released by the gas compressor near their school
17 and near many of their homes in the same neighborhood.

18 It is crucial that the environmental review for this project carefully assess the impact of air
19 quality and how it affects the public health, particularly during the regular operation of the
20 compressor. More importantly, we need to prioritize the alternative locations for this facility. It
21 does not belong near a school or residential areas. Thank you very much for your time and attention
22 for this important issue.

23 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you Lane.

24 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you.

25 **Grace Weeks:** You reset this timer and I will lower your hand. All right. Okay, next up is Miles Hogan.
26 Please unmute yourself. You have 2 minutes.

27 **Miles Hogan:** Thank you for the presentation and good evening. My name is Miles Hogan. I'm a senior
28 assistant city attorney with the City of Ventura. I wanna thank you for holding this meeting and also
29 thank you for doing an in-person meeting in the coming weeks. We would request that at that
30 meeting that live Spanish interpretation be provided as well. The City is not going to provide any
31 comments at this time during the meeting but we are preparing and will submit comments during
32 the scoping period. Thank you.

33 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you, Miles, for your comment.

34 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you.

35 **Grace Weeks:** All right, next up is Lucia Marquez. I will unmute you or unmute yourself please and let
36 me reset the timer. Go ahead.

37 **Lucia Marquez:** All right. Good evening, my name is Lucia Marquez. I'm the policy director at CAUSE, a
38 community organization that has been organizing local residents in Ventura and Santa Barbara

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1 County for over 15 years. More specifically, Ventura. A lot of our work focuses on tenants, rights
2 workers, rights and environmental justice. In Ventura our work has been focused on the west side
3 of Ventura because of the long history of environmental pollution.

4 This is an area that's surrounded by oil wells, many of which leak toxins into our air and water.
5 The longstanding operation of the nearby gas compressor also have caused years of methane leaks,
6 and venting. As a result, it's no surprise that pollution mapping tools like CalEnviroScreen show that
7 the census tract closest to the compressor ranks in the 87th percentile for pollution burden
8 throughout the entire State. In addition to that, majority of residents in this census tract are also
9 people of color.

10 Being here and speaking to you in this meeting is years in the making. In 2021, hundreds of
11 Westside residents united to demand an environmental review before any decision could be made
12 on this project. So I want to thank you but more importantly, highlight the need for that in-person
13 meeting and we're really looking forward to it.

14 It's really essential that we evaluate the health impacts comprehensively. We know that our
15 kids' health is being harmed. Children have higher rates of asthma, reoccurring nosebleeds, and we
16 need to ask ourselves, like, what are the lifelong consequences for children whose bodies are
17 developing that are exposed to high levels of methane for years and years. I encourage you to look
18 at alternatives like electric or smaller compressor to reduce pollution burden.

19 I also wanted to highlight the issue around safety. Wildfires is a huge vulnerability to our
20 community. Wildfires, like the Thomas Fire, are no longer rare events, they're our new normal.
21 Uncontrolled wildfires in your homes is frightening enough, to add a compressor station to it, that's
22 only asking for devastation so prioritizing alternative locations is something we wanted to uplift as
23 well. Thank you.

24 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you.

25 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you very much.

26 **Grace Weeks:** Alright moving on. Let me reset this timer. Next is Lyra Cabanban. I'm unmuting you, go
27 ahead.

28 **Lyra Cabanban:** Good evening, my name is Lyra and I am a student at Oxnard College and a fellow with
29 CFROG. As an older sister to younger siblings, the idea of expanding this dangerous compressor
30 station that is located across the street from an elementary school is deeply concerning. I am here
31 today to urge you to do a few things.

32 First, I am urging you to thoroughly study and consider the public safety concerns related to
33 this proposed expansion in the Environmental Impact Report. Compressor stations at are at high
34 risk of explosion and put hundreds of children and families within what's called an incineration
35 zone, meaning that if an explosion were to ever occur, anyone in the surrounding zone would be
36 immediately incinerated.

37 Furthermore, SoCalGas, the operator proposing this expansion is the same operator
38 responsible for the 2015 Aliso Canyon disaster, the largest natural gas blowout in U.S. history. How

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1 can we trust that SoCalGas can responsibly manage and operate their facilities and prevent a
2 disaster like this from happening in our community?

3 The second thing I'm urging the Commission to do is to study alternative locations for this
4 compressor station that are located far away from homes, schools and businesses. I am also urging
5 the Commission to explore less polluting designs for this compressor station that rely on clean
6 energy and electric sources as opposed to fossil fuels.

7 Lastly, while I thank the Commission for moving forward with an in-person public meeting later
8 this month. I would like to ask that we be notified of this meeting at least 15 days in advance to
9 allow time to notify community members. Thank you.

10 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you for your comment.

11 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you Lyra.

12 **Grace Weeks:** All right, Haley Ehlers, I'm going to unmute you. Go ahead.

13 **Haley Ehlers CFROG:** Hello, my name is Haley Ehlers with Climate First: Replacing Oil and Gas. I live 3
14 quarters mile away from the Ventura Compressor Station. From my porch I can almost always hear
15 the deep rumbling noise of the site, and often the air in my neighborhood has an unusual chemical
16 odor. It's the type of smell that your body instinctively knows is unsafe and to head inside. I try my
17 best to protect myself from this pollution with air filters, and even planning the route of my jogs,
18 based on wind direction at the time and only walking until I feel safely far enough away, knowing
19 that running will make me breathe this pollution even deeper.

20 Now it is time for the State and your commission to help protect me and my neighbors too. The
21 EIR must be comprehensive and incorporate the experiences and priorities of our community, not
22 just what is deemed important by SoCalGas. We've heard many stories from parents who have
23 taken their children out of school at EP Foster Elementary, fearing public safety and air quality
24 concerns. How are you studying the potential impacts of a blast leaks or big blowdown events?
25 What about noise levels? This facility is in our lived environment and its impact is vast. This analysis
26 must be illustrated above that.

27 Of course it is in the best interest of the profiting company, SoCalGas, to limit the scope of the
28 review to avoid alternatives proposed by the community, but it should not be in the interest of the
29 Commission who is dedicated to advancing equity and environmental justice. The Commission must
30 prioritize studying alternative locations with less pollution. I'd also like to thank you for agreeing to
31 host an in-person meeting here in West Ventura where we're excited to see you, and you can hear
32 from even more community members. Thank you.

33 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you.

34 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you. All right. Next up is Jose Manuel. I am unmuting you.

35 **Jose Manuel:** Good afternoon, my name is Jose Manuel Rodriguez and I'm community organizer for
36 the cause of Entera, a nonprofit organization that aims to tackle social justice issues that revolve
37 around immigration rights, housing rights and environmental justice issues.

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1 This proposed expansion for the SoCalGas compressor is a classic environmental injustice
2 project aimed to further pollute our local area at the expense of our community. This gas
3 compressor has posed a great threat to our local youth due to its proximity to an elementary
4 school, causing several health related issues in our youth population that are attributed to the
5 presence of greenhouse gases being emitted to the atmosphere. In a study conducted by NASA,
6 they have identified around 550 geographical individual points in California that identified high
7 amounts of greenhouse gases, specifically methane to be actively released into the atmosphere.
8 Upon further inspection, it was found that 10 of these points are considered super emitters that
9 contribute to 1/3rd of California's methane output, and Ventura has been noted to be one of these
10 super emitters. This is a cause for concern. We, as Venturians, should not be subject to the high
11 amounts of gas emissions that prove to be affecting our health, most especially the health of our
12 children.

13 It does not make sense to further increase the production of emissions and neglect the serious
14 health impacts this compressor will bring if this expansion is given the green light. As a community,
15 we are actively trying to rectify the past years of environmental neglect at our expense from big
16 industrial corporations like SoCalGas, and are committed to advocate for more environmentally
17 sound alternatives that will alleviate the health issues we are actively facing due to our current
18 environment.

19 I thank the Commission for holding this virtual space for us to voice our concerns but I strongly
20 urge you to set up an in-person meeting space so you can hear from our people on what we are
21 currently dealing with, and how an expansion will further worsen our community. Thank you.

22 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you.

23 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you for that input.

24 **Grace Weeks:** Next up is Brooke.

25 **Brooke Balthaser:** Okay. Good evening, my name is Brooke Balthazer and I'm the community
26 organizing manager at CFROG or Climate First: Replacing Oil and Gas. I'd like to thank the
27 Commission for moving forward with an in-person meeting for this issue and ask that this meeting
28 be held at a time that is convenient for working families, and includes language accessibility to
29 assure that all residents can attend and participate. I would also like to ask that we're notified of
30 this meeting at least 15 days in advance, and that any and all material related to this meeting are
31 available in English and Spanish.

32 I would also like to strongly urge the Commission to study the significant public safety and air
33 quality concerns in the environmental impact report for this proposed expansion. There is a reason
34 why compressor stations are generally situated away from sensitive sites, and that is because of the
35 risk of explosion. SoCalGas is the same operator responsible for the 2015 Aliso Canyon disaster, and
36 cannot be trusted to responsibly operate this facility, let alone one that was doubled in size. This
37 proposed expansion would double the pollution that our community has to face each and every
38 day. In 2017, NASA identified this compressor station as a super emitter of methane, a pollutant
39 that has significant negative impacts on public health.

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1 Now, imagine you're a parent of a student attending EP Foster Elementary School. Would you
2 send your child to school every day, knowing that the facility next door was a super emitter of
3 methane, and at risk of exploding. If your answer is no, I have to wonder why the Commission is
4 okay with making this a reality for hundreds of families.

5 I would like to urge the Commission to prioritize studying alternative locations for this
6 compressor station with less polluting designs. Building new polluting equipment in this community
7 is an environmental justice harm and fails to uphold the CPUC's environmental and social justice
8 commitments. This is an opportunity to relocate the project out of a disadvantaged community and
9 remedy a legacy of pollution. Furthermore, the Commission should recognize that the oil and gas
10 industry is in decline, and we have an opportunity to manage this decline in a way that fosters a just
11 transition to protect frontline communities. Thank you.

12 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you.

13 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you.

14 **Grace Weeks:** Okay. Next up is Carrie. I'm going to unmute. Let me reset the timer, whenever you're
15 ready.

16 **Kari Aist:** Thank you. My name is Kari Aist and I am a part of the leadership circle of Showing Up for
17 Racial Justice in Ventura County, as well as a member of the Fierce Vulnerability Network which
18 began this Westside Clean Air Coalition way back when, in 2017 or 2018, when we first heard about
19 the huge release that was viewed by NASA from out in outer space, or wherever. And were very
20 alarmed with all that that super emitter stuff that was going on, on the Avenue where some of our
21 members lived. So I am actually at a school board meeting about a quarter mile from the
22 compressor station in question here and we're all rallying for another cause but really, what's going
23 on overall is that we're all concerned about supporting the needs of the people over the
24 requirement to make profits by the oil and gas industry in such a way as to harm everyone around.
25 It is just an absolute no brainer that we ought to be moving that compressor station away from
26 Foster Elementary right across the street. And if CPUC truly does stand for, you know, reducing
27 environmental harms and standing up for the people and all the other things, well, then, I think that
28 you ought to be pushing all you can to make this compressor station, well first of all, never be
29 expanded but also to be relocated somewhere where at least it's not going to be harming the
30 thousands of people that are in the vicinity, living and working and trying to go to school. If you've
31 ever been by this compressor station when gas is released, it's not good for your health. And the
32 kids are exposed to it almost every day. This is just not acceptable.

33 So I'm really glad that CPUC not only is having this chance for us to weigh in virtually, but also
34 gives, is giving us an opportunity to come together in person to make our statements and I want to
35 see CPUC also begin pushing as if your children were going to EP Foster, as if you were living in the
36 neighborhoods surrounding this compressor station. Make sure that we get that environmental
37 impact review and then squelch this forever, this need to expand the station, and instead push
38 amongst you as hard as possible to relocate somewhere else. We know it can be done, it has to be
39 done. It is essentially a very racist position to not be moving it. So I call on you to make that happen

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1 and I will definitely be there in person to continue to make my opinions known. Thank you for
2 letting me have my say tonight, appreciate it.

3 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you for your comment.

4 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you for coming out.

5 **Grace Weeks:** Except is Ron Whitehurst, going to allow you to unmute, whenever you're ready.

6 **Ron Whitehurst:** Hello, my name is Ron Whitehurst. I'm a member of the West Side Community
7 Council, and I'm chair of the Revite Committee and we're really proud of our neighborhood. The
8 West Side, the creative side of Ventura, and the compressor was placed in our neighborhood. When
9 the city fathers saw the poor brown people as disposable, and it was a red line community, and
10 there was all kinds of dirty industry put into the neighborhood. It's time for this to stop. It's time to
11 reverse that wrong.

12 The SoCalGas has proposed some different sites, one of them is actually closer to my house,
13 the Devil's Canyon site and though we need to have more options, and so-called dash, and not have
14 that it costs more money as a major consideration, how much is the value of a human life. How
15 much is the value of a child's health from being in the neighborhood where they are suffering from
16 asthma, from continual exposure to the gas, not just methane, but the B-tex materials, benzene,
17 methyl benzene, touine, and xylene that accompany the SoCal natural gas.

18 So we're working on decreasing our gas use, moving off of fossil fuels and so that should be
19 consideration, there should be planning for less natural gas, should be part of the considerations for
20 expanding this operation. The gas is going up to Montecito. We should maybe relocate this next to
21 Oprah Winfrey's house. I'm sure she would appreciate sacrificing her health for SoCalGas. Thank
22 you.

23 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you for your comments. Melissa, you are next let me allow you to unmute, and
24 whenever you're ready.

25 **Melissa Muñoz:** Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Melissa Munoz. I am a student at Oxnard
26 College, a fellow with Climate First: Replacing Oil and Gas or better known by our acronym as
27 CFROG, and a lifelong resident of Ventura County.

28 I remember vividly as this past October, while canvassing these friendly neighborhoods, seeing
29 kids play around, when suddenly there was the gas compressor station. I'd learned about it but I
30 was truly baffled to have seen it just a crosswalk away from EP Elementary School and the
31 surrounding homes.

32 As CFROG has visited the west side of Ventura to invite community members to informational
33 events, we had asked the community members about their living experience in dangerously close
34 proximity to the compressor station. I heard very similar complaints – occasional nosebleeds,
35 migraines too frequent, some people with asthma, children complaining of the horrible smell, loud
36 noises, and feelings of unsafety. No family or child should feel unsafe in their communities. No
37 family should be put in health's harm way, or put at risk if some leak or burst were to occur. The
38 residents of Ventura, but these neighborhoods in particular, deserve better and need to be heard
39 and protected. I would like to reference an alarming study by NASA in 2017, identifying this

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1 compressor station as a super emitter of methane. With all that being said, it's appreciated that the
2 Commission has planned to host an in-person meeting community engagement meeting. I would
3 like to ask that this meeting be held at a central location in West Ventura at a time that
4 accommodates working families and includes language accessibility to ensure all community
5 members can participate. Thank you.

6 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you, Melissa. Alright. Next is John Hankins. Let me unmute you, and whenever
7 you're ready.

8 **John Hankins:** Mute. Thank you. Can you hear me?

9 **Grace Weeks:** Yes.

10 **John Hankins:** Alright. I'm going to take a slightly different tack. First of all, this is my own personal
11 comments. I live on the west side of Sycamore Village and, man, isn't that really nice bike path
12 great? They upgraded it. I am also a Sierra Club journalist. I'm a journalist all my life. I was here since
13 the 1969 oil spill, not my fault, but myself and Bob Solon, and all that, we did all that stuff. And then
14 there's Planes Pipeline, and then and then you know all this stuff that's going on in the oil industry,
15 the open up a new pipeline, and this, that, and the other, and then you had really bad actors, Greca
16 Oil Company and leaks and leaks. District attorneys went after them. So the take I want to impart is
17 I've been covering the oil and gas industry since the sixties, mostly from Santa Barbara, but I moved
18 here in 2000, and I got to say, I don't trust the oil and gas industry, and I know this as a journalist.
19 Now my stories were always fair. In fact, the *Oil and Gas Journal* printed some of my stories, and so
20 and I also have a family member who works in the industry. But please move it. You'll be a hero.
21 And I understand the PUC will give, will let you raise your rates if you are in dire straits when you
22 move.

23 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you for your comment, John.

24 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you.

25 **Grace Weeks:** Okay. Next is Jonathan Ullman. I'm gonna allow you to unmute.

26 **Jonathan Ullman:** Hi, my name is Jonathan Ullman. I'm the director of the Santa Barbara Ventura,
27 Chapter of the Sierra Club. Our members and supporters live in the neighborhood. We are very
28 concerned about this development. The fact is that when one of the reasons that we're here today
29 is because of the very, very or if not any notice that was given about this project to begin with, so I
30 hope that we have charted a new course, and that there is plenty of time for people to go to the
31 public hearing in person. We have at least 2 weeks' notice but frankly, when I heard about this
32 event, I was very surprised it was coming up so quickly. I was just, I've never seen that. I know it's
33 scoping but it's still, it's very important that the community be aware.

34 You need to look at the impacts of gas explosions, gas on the school and the surrounding
35 neighborhood, you need to look at the emissions that might occur in case of accidents, but also on a
36 daily basis. You should also look at what happens upstream or downstream, rather, I guess, but up
37 north in Golita, the Golita facility, the underground reservoir facility which sits underneath Santa
38 Barbara Airport, the major public park, Bayfront Park, and UC Santa Barbara, because this will have
39 impacts on that, and it will make that potentially more dangerous.

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1 Also, you should look at the climate. This will increase carbon, which is diametrically opposed
2 to the policy of the State of California. And so this is definitely moving in the wrong direction. There
3 are alternatives. You should move it, you should keep it the same size or remove the natural gas in
4 that area. We have alternatives. We really don't need it. Thank you.

5 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you for your comment. As of now, we have no more hands raised. I do see that
6 there's some people on the phone. So again, if you're calling in. Oh, one more comment. As I was
7 saying, if you are on the phone and you want to raise your hand, dial *9, and then *6 to unmute
8 yourself when asked if you're on the phone and I that hand went away. So go ahead and re-raise it if
9 you wanted to make a comment.

10 **Brewster Birdsall:** Anyone on the line want to dial that *9 to raise your hand, this would be the good
11 time. And seeing none. I would begin to close this meeting with the very clear caveat that the story
12 is to be continued. Grace, how does that sound to you. Should we move to the next slide.

13 **Grace Weeks:** Sure.

14 **Brewster Birdsall:** All the folks who have been notified of this meeting via email or other means, as
15 long as we have your email address, you will receive notification of the in-person meeting and the
16 date and the time, and thank you everyone for your thoughtful comments here loud and clear, a
17 couple of very clear themes here that are worth deeply exploring and in terms of advance notice as
18 well for the next meeting and scheduling opportunity for families and folks who are working. And I
19 know this time 6 to 7 pm is a busy time for folks with families so really appreciate your participation
20 tonight. I do see one more hand coming online. And I think if we could unmute that, there's Molly
21 McCoy available.

22 **Grace Weeks:** Go ahead.

23 **Molly McCoy [parts inaudible – 0:55:50]:** Good evening, my name is Molly McCoy. Thank you so much
24 for hosting this meeting. I grew up in Ventura County, and when I was a senior in high school, I first
25 learned about the equity issues with the gas compressor [...] and community advocate [...].

26 4 years later, as a graduating environmental policy senior from UC Davis, I felt deeply
27 concerned, and I'm now quite familiar with the CEQA procedure and greatly worried about the
28 submission, CEQA scope, and process. While air quality and noise levels are included in Appendix G,
29 it is still worth noting that we are greatly worried about the impact from the compressors and want
30 these areas of concern to be studied to the full extent as the CEQA procedure outlines and not
31 merely exempted or waived off. With the alternative section, I implore the Commission to prioritize
32 smaller electric and unpopulated sites over any other proposal.

33 Not only are we the community calling for environmentally just outcomes, but so is Senate Bill
34 350, the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act 2015 which mandates the Commission improve
35 air quality in disadvantaged communities and opt for renewable energy at their location sites. The
36 gas compressor and surrounding community [...] has a [...] percentile of 83 and a pollution burden
37 percentile of 87 which aligns with this bill definition. While CEQA doesn't have a universal
38 environmental justice [...] chapters, I would like to direct the Commission's attention to the Bay
39 Area Fair Quality Management Districts and [...] Justice chapter. The first of its kind and has been

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1 highlighted as a feature of CEQA's equity inclusion [...] equity agency, the CPUC can choose to adopt
2 these thresholds and prove that it's committed to equity by properly analyzing this project. With
3 this, CPUC can take initiative and lead California in the new ways of energy planning and bring
4 environmental justice to our [...] for once and for all.

5 How else do we meet California's climate and justice goals on time and make over [...]. If we
6 don't stop permanent projects like this, compressors and a low income margins like Ventura.

7 That, aside, I'm greatly appreciative of the Commission's decision to move forward with an in-
8 person community meeting. But I [...] amplify the calls for better community notice time and
9 accessible Spanish translations for meetings and community material. Thank you so much for your
10 time.

11 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you, Molly.

12 **Brewster Birdsall:** Thank you for that.

13 **Grace Weeks:** All right, and one more, Margo. I'm going to allow you to unmute.

14 Please state your name and let me get your timer going. Whenever you're ready.

15 **Margo Davis:** Hello, My name is Margo Davis. Are you able to hear me?

16 **Grace Weeks:** Yes.

17 **Brewster Birdsall:** Yes.

18 **Margo Davis:** Thank you very much. I live about a half a mile from the compressor station and I feel
19 strongly that it must be moved. There has to be an alternative where you put it somewhere else,
20 not near a residential area. Or if SoCalGas doesn't want to do that, it's probably because of the cost.
21 They just think it's cheaper to keep it here, that's all they can think about, which is not a very good
22 way to think. You're not thinking about what's important, that everybody else is raising here. So it
23 needs to be moved or it needs to be shut down. Thank you very much.

24 **Grace Weeks:** Thank you. Margo.

25 **Brewster Birdsall:** Well thank you everyone. I see no more hands. We had about 31 folks on the line
26 tonight, and I'm really happy that you were able to make it. As I mentioned before, I recognize that
27 6 pm can be an awkward time. I'm not quite sure what other times may be better but we will
28 certainly work on it and thank you for your participation and active involvement and thoughtful
29 comments.

30 As I mentioned many times, the Commission will send out another email blast with the in-
31 person meeting, date and time. The scoping comment period at this point is essentially extended to
32 a date to be determined. And with that, I think I will move to close our presentation tonight. Any
33 final calls?

34 Thank you everyone for being a part of this and we will look forward to meeting some of you
35 face to face in Ventura, probably within a month or so. Okay, have a good night and thanks for your
36 time.

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3 **From: Recording.transcript.vtt, edited for clarity.**
4

5 **Brewster Birdsall:** Hello to the participants on Zoom. I hope you can hear me. We'll be beginning this
6 presentation in a few minutes after we have some folks here in the room and we'll be taking public
7 comments at the end of about a 20 min presentation. So we'll begin that presentation here in 3 or
8 4 min. Just give time for people to get settled and really, thank you.

9 **Brewster Birdsall:** Hello on Zoom. We are just about to begin the meeting here and I've made some
10 housekeeping announcements to the room here in Ventura and thank you for participating. We see
11 about 18 or 20 participants on Zoom and maybe about 30 or 40 here in the room.

12 For those of you in the room, if anyone needs a copy of the Notice of Preparation, we have
13 hard copies available in Spanish and English. Just raise your hand and you may have a copy. For
14 anyone who would like to be on the email list for future announcements, there is a sign in sheet
15 right by the ramp and the table over there for email addresses. If you put your email down, then we
16 will send you future announcements.

17 And I see one more hand for ... there we go. Okay, thank you. So we're handing out some paper
18 copies of the notices here in the meeting.

19 I'll begin. Welcome to this scoping meeting for the Ventura Compressor Modernization Project.
20 This meeting is being directed by the California Public Utilities Commission Staff. This is a public
21 meeting for all people interested in the Ventura Compressor Modernization Project.

22 Today is April 15th 2025. We are holding this meeting in the Bell Arts Factory about one mile
23 from the site. This meeting is also a virtual meeting on the Zoom platform.

24 Please note, this meeting is being recorded for use by the agency during the proceeding for the
25 project and this presentation is available online at the project website today. We posted a copy of
26 the presentation for you to view and download and copies of the Notice of Preparation are also
27 available in Spanish and English at that same website. I want to note upfront this meeting is being
28 held to ensure a robust public engagement and outreach.

29 We're happy to be here in Ventura, and I look forward to hearing from you. The scoping period
30 will close on April 30th. I'll talk about this more later in the in the presentation. So going on to the
31 slides here – the meeting guidelines. This is a presentation that will last about 20 minutes, maybe a
32 little longer, and during this presentation participants on Zoom may write in the chat box and these
33 will become part of the recording.

34 If you want to make a written comment on the project, please use the email address which is
35 shown here, and it will be shown again and again. In the Zoom format, all the participants will be
36 muted until the time for public comment at the end of the presentation. Here in the room, we will
37 take public comments at the end of the presentation before hearing from the Zoom participants, so
38 that the folks in the room have a chance to speak first.

39 Here's a quick rundown of the order of events for the scoping presentation. And, as I said, this
40 should take about 20 min and a public comment period will follow some introductions.

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1 Who are we and who do we represent? I'll try to avoid using acronyms but some of the
2 abbreviations appear throughout the slides.

3 Now the scoping meeting is being directed by the staff at the Public Utilities Commission, the
4 California Public Utilities Commission. John Forsyth is the CPUC project manager, and Michelle
5 Wilson is here as the program supervisor for the California Public Utilities Commission. The
6 California Public Utilities Commission is the State Regulator responsible for safe and reliable utility
7 service at reasonable rates and for this project, the utility that is under review is the natural gas
8 provider, Southern California Gas Company, otherwise known as the applicant.

9 My name is Brewster Birdsall and I am from Aspen Environmental Group and the CPUC hired
10 Aspen to prepare an environmental review that is compliant with the California Environmental
11 Quality Act known as CEQA. Grace Weeks is here from Aspen helping to facilitate and Aspen
12 Environmental Group will prepare this environmental impact report (or EIR) for the CPUC to use in
13 reviewing the project that is proposed by the applicant. SoCalGas is the applicant seeking CPUC
14 approval to construct and operate the Ventura Compressor Modernization. The formal application
15 was filed in August 2023. Over the subsequent year, supplemental information came to the Public
16 Utilities Commission and made the application complete. It was determined in late 2024, October
17 31st of 2024.

18 Now the purpose of this meeting is to give you information on the process that the CPUC must
19 follow in developing the environmental impact report. The scoping process allows us to hear your
20 ideas on the scope and the content of the environmental review, and for us to hear your issues of
21 concern.

22 Scoping meetings are required for projects that are statewide and regional significance as this
23 one is. Later we'll give you direction on how to file your comments on the scope and content of the
24 environmental impact report that we're preparing. Your comments can help the CPUC identify the
25 environmental effects and ways to mitigate environmental effects, including possible alternatives to
26 the project.

27 This is a chart of the basic application process. The applicant must follow certain steps before
28 the CPUC will decide to approve the new infrastructure. The environmental impact report will be
29 one of many considerations within the discretionary decision of approving or disapproving the new
30 infrastructure.

31 Now our goal in preparing the environmental impact report is to provide a written analysis that
32 is compliant with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act and the spirit of
33 CEQA centers on disclosure. Our audience is you – the public and the agency decision makers. The
34 environmental impact report will provide information on the possible environmental damage and
35 how to avoid it. The law requires us to focus on how the project may cause an indirect or direct
36 physical change in the environment. So you'll hear us talk about this physical impacts to the
37 environment.

38 The overall process of preparing an environmental impact report follows certain predictable
39 steps that can take a year or more to fully complete and scoping is one of the early steps. The input

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1 we receive here will help to shape the content of the environmental impact report. After the draft
2 environmental impact report becomes available, another round of public review and comment will
3 occur, followed by a final environmental impact report, and then a movement towards certifying
4 the document as complete or compliant with the California Environmental Quality Act.

5 So this slide shows the basic content of the project description that must appear in the
6 environmental impact report. Our analysis of impacts will focus on these activities, including the
7 long-term maintenance and use of the facility over the life of the project. We'll describe how these
8 activities may cause physical changes in the environment.

9 Onto some specifics about the project – the site of the project is an existing natural gas
10 compressor station and although it is zoned as industrial, the site itself is adjacent to sensitive land
11 uses, including residences in the EP Foster Elementary School.

12 The California Public Utilities Commission has an adopted environmental and social justice
13 plan. The project site is located in a disadvantaged community which is a designation defined by the
14 California Environmental Protection Agency. When making its decision on the project, the
15 CPUC will consider whether the project is consistent with the goals of the CPUC's Environmental and
16 Social Justice Action Plan as adopted by the Commission in 2022, before this application was filed
17 and found complete.

18 Although environmental justice is not a topic in the consideration of environmental effects
19 under CEQA, the EIR will disclose the CPUC procedures for consideration of environmental and
20 social justice in the overall decision-making process.

21 This slide summarizes the different equipment that SoCalGas proposes to construct and
22 operate at the site, and the project overall entails the modernization of the Ventura Compressor
23 Station. In summary, SoCalGas would upgrade the compressor station to modernize and improve
24 the reliability of this portion of California's natural gas transmission system, which extends from the
25 Ventura Compressor Station through Santa Barbara and Goleta, and to the north as far as
26 communities around San Luis Obispo and Paso Robles.

27 The project would replace 3 aging natural gas driven compressors with a new hybrid
28 configuration composed of 2 electric and 2 natural gas driven compressors. SoCalGas articulates
29 that the purpose and need for their project within the application, which is available at the CPUC
30 website.

31 I'll show some slides showing ground level views around the existing site. And for those of us
32 here in Ventura, I'm sure some of these pictures will feel familiar.

33 First, this is a view along North Olive Street, adjacent to the site. With the project, new
34 structures would become visible. The project would retain the fence along North Olive Street.
35 Moving a little bit further, the project would also retain the fence and the perimeter fence would
36 remain the same, and this is at the intersection of West McFarlane Drive.

37 Moving quickly. Excuse me back one. This is more of an angled view into the site from again
38 North Olive Street, but facing more to the southwest.

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1 And this photo shows the tan, it's yellowish tan, blowdown stack that is partially obscured by
2 the fence to the right of the center. And the project would have taller blowdown stack.

3 This is a photo from Ventura River trail, facing to the east. The exhaust stacks for the 3
4 compressor engines appear just over this chain link fence on the left. That's a more distant view.
5 And the view from Grant Park Ridgeline Trail with the site in the more of a middle ground.

6 This slide shows a conceptual site plan proposed by the applicant and the project would add
7 larger structures along the western edge of the site, primarily the compressor building, a new
8 blowdown stack is more in the center of the site and the project would remove the existing
9 compressor building from the northern edge, in that empty spot up there.

10 Okay, next up some details on the content of the environmental impact report that we will be
11 preparing. These are the various chapters that will appear in the environmental impact report.
12 We're planning to include Public Safety within the Hazards and Hazardous Materials topic.

13 Now, each of the chapters in the environmental impact report would follow this outline,
14 beginning with a description of the environmental setting, regulatory setting as well, and then a
15 threshold of significance for each environmental impact and a conclusion with mitigation necessary
16 to avoid impacts and also an evaluation of cumulative impacts and the impacts of alternatives to the
17 project.

18 A little bit more about alternatives - alternatives are an important consideration. The scope of
19 the environmental impact report must include a range of alternatives. The range of alternatives,
20 however, is limited to those that meet most of the basic project objectives and these project
21 objectives are specifically articulated by the project applicant. So I'll spend a moment talking about
22 those project objectives.

23 There are 2 slides of project objectives that have been articulated by SoCalGas and the CPUC
24 must keep these objectives in mind when reviewing possible alternatives to the project. As I
25 mentioned, earlier alternatives to the project must meet most of the basic project objectives. On
26 this 1st slide you may notice that SoCalGas emphasizes reliably serving this north coastal portion of
27 their system and this includes moving natural gas into the La Colita underground storage fields.

28 Here's the second slide of project objectives. This shows that the company has an interest in
29 reducing the levels of air pollutant emissions from the facility and in completing the modernization
30 in a timely manner.

31 The CPUC will actively explore and compare alternatives within the environmental impact report.
32 The reasonable range of alternatives could include alternative technologies and even a complete
33 relocation of the facility to an alternative site. The environmental impact report must also include
34 analysis of the no project alternative and that has to describe what could reasonably be expected to
35 occur in the foreseeable future if the project is not approved.

36 This concludes the short, scoping presentation. We will present the sequence of next steps
37 here after scoping and we will move to public comments here in a moment.

38 As noted upfront, the CPUC is accepting scoping comments right now and future events and
39 milestones will be announced via email and also posted on the CPUC's website for this project. The

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1 project website includes a link to download the Notice of Preparation which was released on
2 February 28th. The Notice of Preparation is available in Spanish on the website, and the close of
3 scoping is 2 weeks from now, April 30th. Of course, we encourage you to email your scoping
4 comments anytime earlier rather than later. Scoping comments may be mailed or really email is
5 probably the best to this address here – vcm_ceqa@aspenerg.com.

6 When you submit scoping comments, you should include your name, your organization, if any,
7 and your mailing address, email address for future notifications. Public comments will become part
8 of the public record and will be published in a scoping report at the time of the draft environmental
9 impact report.

10 Thank you for your attention and we will now provide some time for public comments.

11 Because this meeting is being held on Zoom, the microphone is here for those participants on
12 Zoom to hear you. You may have to come and speak into this microphone. If you would like to
13 speak to the room, feel free to speak and we will call on you. Let's decide how to go through that in
14 an orderly fashion.

15 In general, we would like the comments to be concise and to stay on topic. Ideally respect
16 others opinions. The comments will be recorded as long as they are spoken into the microphone on
17 this computer here. And, as I said, written comments are encouraged.

18 I think, in the room here, what we should probably do is just simply raise hands and maybe,
19 Grace, you can give me a sense – are there many hands raised on Zoom?

20 **Grace Weeks:** On Zoom so far, 2 on Zoom so far.

21 **Brewster:** Folks will be raising their hands on Zoom while we go around the room here. 1st up, I've
22 met Miles. If you'd like to stand right there and speak any staff.

23 **Miles Hogan:** Thank you. Okay. alright. Good evening, everybody. My name is Miles. I'm a senior
24 assistant city attorney with the City of Ventura. I just want to let everybody know the City of
25 Ventura will be submitting written comments by the deadline of April 30th and we encourage
26 everybody in the community, if you want to submit comments, as was mentioned, you can share
27 them tonight but we also encourage you to submit them in writing by that April 30th deadline.
28 Thank you. Oh, and thank you for doing an in person meeting. We hope, when there's future
29 meetings like this that you again do them in the community as well. Thank you.

30 **Brewster:** Absolutely. You're welcome. Thank you. **[inaudible - 00:32:52]** Yes. A question in the room
31 is, will comments be accepted in Spanish written? And the answer is yes, we will keep our
32 translators at the ready to interpret comments written in Spanish. Thank you.

33 **[inaudible - 00:33:16]**

34 **Casey Rodriguez:** Hello! I am Ventura, Art and Culture Commissioner Casey Rodriguez. The
35 environmental social justice plan lockstep, a land acknowledgement, and a moment for a Shumash
36 person whose unceded land this compressor sits on should have opened this meeting. I have
37 personally been actively opposing this compressor since day one. Because it is my birth obligation
38 and responsibility as a Shumash woman to not only care for my ancestral homeland, but safeguard

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1 all lives that currently live here, for we are all connected. Thank you for all who have done years of
2 work protecting west side citizens and all who work and visit here. As for cultural resources, it is
3 crucial to reach out to Shumash elder Julie Stinsley. Please reach out to Ventura councilwoman Liz
4 Campos for her contact information. Thank you.

5 **Brewster:** Thank you for that comment.

6 **Haley Ehlers:** Hello, my name is Haley Ehlers with Climate First: Replacing Oil and Gas, or CFROG. I live
7 3 quarter miles away from the Ventura Compressor Station. From my porch I can almost always
8 hear the deep rumbling noise of the site, and often the air in my neighborhood has an unusual
9 chemical odor. It's the type of smell that your body instinctively knows is unsafe, and to head inside.
10 I try my best to protect myself from this pollution with air filters, and even planning the route of my
11 jogs based on wind direction at the time, and only walking until I feel safely far enough away,
12 knowing that running could make me breathe this pollution even deeper.

13 Now it's time for the State and your commission to help protect me and my neighbors too. The
14 EIR must be comprehensive and incorporate the experiences and priorities of our community, not
15 just what is deemed important by SoCalGas. We have heard many stories from parents who have
16 taken their children out of EP Foster Elementary fearing public safety and air quality concerns. How
17 are you studying the potential impacts of a blast, leaks or big blowdown events? What about noise
18 levels? This facility is in our lived environment and its impact is vast. This analysis must be
19 illustrative of that.

20 Of course, it's in the best interest of the profiting company, SoCalGas to limit the scope of the
21 CEQA review to avoid the alternative proposed by the community. But it should not be in the
22 interest of the Commission who is dedicated to advancing equity and environmental justice. The
23 Commission must prioritize studying alternative locations with less pollution.

24 We'd like to thank you for holding this in person meeting here in West Ventura. We hope you
25 were able to enjoy our neighborhood, and even visit the site to experience for yourself firsthand the
26 smell, noise, and danger that it creates in contrast to the vibrant, diverse, and resilient community
27 and nearby school that surrounds it. Thank you.

28 **Brewster:** Thank you. I see the 1st hand I see, and then a second. Would you like to come up? Or ...

29 **Grace:** It's just the computer. Do you want me to scoot it forward?

30 **[inaudible - 00:37:26.830]**

31 **Professor:** Hi, I'm a retired human anatomy **[inaudible]** professor. At present I'm the last of the
32 citizens. I'm a disabled law abiding citizen. I see that for whatever reason, out of a 102,000, the
33 minimum inhabitants of this community, there's less than a hundred people that is now
34 representative of what's going on in our communities. Not touching the external events and
35 recommending everyone, we can only act within the rule of law, nonviolent, peaceful within the
36 Constitution. At present, our country is facing economic warfare, words, etc, etc. and our human
37 capital are the children. Those children's are very important to us.

38 One thing I observed, the presentation, for whatever reason is lacking, it's lacking statistics
39 about the consequences that about over 40 years SoCal has cost, and the health and the well-being,

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1 the lives of community people. Among the community, people have mine dying of cancer that lived
2 here. I see friends of mine struggling with cancer for the 2nd, 3rd time, live here. Even myself, I'm
3 still struggling with many tests to see how much this cancers are affecting me and my health. So
4 there is no statistic data analysis here.

5 I don't know how the CPUC is going to do these determinations and the misguided majority
6 recommendations for SoCal to stay here. It's a disservice to quality and the life and the lives of
7 American citizens. I have experienced, as many have experienced, nose bleedings, I have
8 experiences sore throats. Oh, struggling with breathing! Even my organs are getting adversely
9 affected.

10 I live near the compressor. What I would like in this CPUC report is this, please include 45 years
11 of data of the health condition of students that have attended the school and live in this
12 neighborhood – how their health has been affected and how they're struggling with the illnesses and
13 see the correlation that might exist between the gases emitted by SoCal, this compressor and the
14 people living here in this community, how that correlates over time, over 45 years, the last 45 years.
15 That should give us a scientific lead where we are at and how adversely it's impacting the
16 community.

17 **[00:42:16]** It's very important because I've seen kids, they **[inaudible]** their by the time they're
18 on the 3rd grade, they cannot run. They suffer asthma, other illnesses, and some of them, as I
19 understand, suffer of cancer and no one's keeping statistics, no one's using methodology of
20 statistics, the consequences that are due to this compressor.

21 It's very important that it be included in these statistics, and that the, that mitigation, you
22 cannot mitigate cancer. You cannot mitigate death, so alternative clean energies we will be very
23 happy for SoCal to sell us wind energy, solar energy, etc. etc. Buy from them, do good business with
24 them. But to continue doing this deadly business, it's adverse to our community and it's a nation
25 problem. It's a national problem. I see, I can tell you I have no use for the Chinese but the Chinese
26 have clean energy. So please, I would like this environmental impact report to include alternative
27 clean energy, like electric cars, etc. etc. And please get a statistic from the hospitals, the schools, the
28 records about the parents, health, the children's health, etc. Thank you.

29 **Woman 1:** Thank you. Just want to give everyone a chance to comment. Go ahead.

30 **Woman 2:** Alright. Maybe we should form a line. We have a lot of hands. But okay,

31 **Brewster:** This hand would be next. Thank you.

32 **[inaudible - 00:44:40.780]**

33 **??:** Sangrado la Nariz (Bleeding from the nose.)

34 **Translator:** I have 25 years living in western tourist. I have 4 kids, and lately we've been having a lot of
35 health problems. I've been taking them to the clinic because blood, their nose bleeds and they say is
36 dryness from the weather. I had pneumonia and asthma. I want to invite you to reflect on all these
37 things, and I agree with the gentleman that the kids, especially they are the future, and we have to
38 keep them in mind. Thank you.

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1 **Brewster:** Thank you.

2 **??:** Is there a microphone?

3 **Brewster:** You just speak into that.

4 **??:** Anyone who has an interpreter gets one, k?

5 **Brewster:** Excuse me?

6 **??:** Interpreters get long term.

7 **[inaudible - 00:46:13.670]**

8 **Kari Aist:** Hi, my name is Kari Aist. I am a representative of the Leadership Circle for Showing Up for
9 Racial Justice among other groups, Fierce Vulnerability Network is another group I'm active with and
10 I think the most important thing to always keep in mind is that though this compressor station was
11 here early, people were allowed to live around it, and the school was allowed to be built across
12 from it before we really understood the impacts. But now we know. And now we know it's
13 environmental injustice to do anything other than move this station.

14 No, any, nothing else will do justice to the people who are marginalized in this community who
15 are hit by not just the impacts of this, but so many other impacts. I stand against pesticide use in the
16 area, that accumulates in bodies in addition to the harms that are sent forth by the air quality
17 impacts and by everything else that happens. So we can't just look at this one thing. What we need
18 to look at is this impacts people in marginalized communities who have never historically been
19 allowed to really live anywhere else by the system. They have no voice, no power. And so they're
20 stuck here absorbing the impacts. But we can stand for them. We can stand against anything other
21 than moving this ridiculous station to an area where, at the very least, if it blows up, it's not going to
22 harm as many people. And it's regular leaks. It's regular air quality impacts, everything else that it
23 does can no longer hurt everyone, including those kids at that school. And they don't have
24 anywhere else they can go, you know, or they're being pulled out. But they need to be educated in
25 health and not coming out of, you know so many grades there with asthma and all **[inaudible]**. So
26 do the right thing. There's no question that CPUC should do nothing but the right thing and move
27 the station.

28 **[inaudible - 00:48:32]**

29 **Brewster:** Thank you.

30 **[inaudible]**

31 **Brewster:** Speaking in the general laptop area.

32 **Woman 3:** ... Everybody can hear me. I'd like to encourage everybody who comes here to use their
33 theater voice and talk to the very back person in the room back there, even if you feel weird when
34 you do it. And I went to a workshop this last weekend about environmental justice. And there I
35 promised myself that I was going to start writing stuff. So I wrote some stuff about this meeting
36 today. It's far too long. I will not read it all, but I will tell you I'm going to read the last part, and the
37 title is, who knew it was the best that we could do, and when we 1st started out burning coal in
38 caves, we didn't know it was going to give people tuberculosis. It took hundreds of years and we

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1 didn't know that the plague was caused by a virus. We did the best we could and with the energy of
2 the sun that's trapped in these remains from the Cretaceous, we have worked miracles as humans.
3 And now we're reaping the whirlwind. In the 19th century, everything that we could do with oil and
4 gas was intoxicating in the 19th century. Who knew it was the best that we could do. But now we
5 know, we know all the ways the waste from our 19th century energy sources are harming our
6 world, our children, our health, our soil, our air and water.

7 We know that many new, non-polluting energy sources exist and are successful in use around
8 the world. I'm going to rework that sentence, and still there are those of us who want to believe
9 that extracting oil and gas is the best we can do. Come on, be **[inaudible - 00:50:51]** step into a
10 clean energy future. Of course it will not be smooth and easy. It will require our full intelligence and
11 creativity. Shutting down energy from the remains of the past and using the energy all around us,
12 and the air and the water and solar, and who knows what more we will find, will be the great work
13 of the coming generations. Dedicate your courage and creativity for the future. Take one little step
14 forward, shut down this old gas compressor station, make the area safer for the school children,
15 their families, and our future.

16 **Brewster:** Thank you. More hands for next.

17 **Brooke Balthaser:** Good evening, my name is Brooke Balthaser and I'm the community organizing
18 manager at CFROG. I'd like to thank you for hosting this hybrid community scoping meeting as the
19 value of allowing our community to share their feedback and priorities regarding this issue cannot
20 be overstated.

21 I would also like to strongly urge the Commission to study the significant public safety and air
22 quality concerns in the environmental impact report for this proposed expansion. There are reasons
23 why compressor stations are generally situated away from sensitive sites, and that is the risk of
24 explosion and exposure to pollution. SoCalGas is the same operator responsible for the 2015 Aliso
25 Canyon disaster and cannot be trusted to responsibly operate this facility, let alone one that was
26 doubled in size.

27 This proposed expansion would double the pollution that our community has to face each and
28 every day. In 2017, NASA identified this compressor station as a super emitter of methane, a
29 pollutant that has significant negative impacts on public health. Now, imagine you're a parent of a
30 student attending EP Foster Elementary School. Would you send your child to school every day,
31 knowing that the facility next door was a super emitter of methane, and at risk of exploding? If your
32 answer is no, I have to wonder why the Commission is okay with making this a reality for hundreds
33 of families.

34 I would also like to urge the Commission to prioritize studying alternative locations for this
35 compressor station with less polluting designs. Building new polluting equipment in this community
36 is an environmental justice harm and fails to uphold the CPUC's environmental and social justice
37 commitments. This is an opportunity to relocate the project out of a disadvantaged community and
38 remedy a legacy of pollution. Furthermore, the Commission should recognize that the oil and gas

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1 industry is in decline, and we have an opportunity to manage this decline in a way that fosters a just
2 transition to clean energy sources and protects jobs and frontline communities. Thank you.

3 **Brewster:** Thank you. Let's see [inaudible - 00:53:38] that's good.

4 **[Speaker?]:** I would ask the environmental group to consider what most of us know [inaudible] gas
5 compressors. Between 2018 and 2020, the Jet Propulsion Lab did flyovers all over the State of
6 California and our gas compressor was considered in the top, I believe, 10 or 12 super emitters
7 leaking methane, not just in their station, but all over the school ground and the neighborhood
8 through pipes. In 2010, in Northern California, a gas pipeline, not a compressor exploded, taking out
9 3 or 4 blocks in a neighborhood, and it was there that a fire captain coined the phrase, Incineration
10 Zone. A lot of us have known for years we live in an Incineration Zone. I lived for 20 years less than a
11 quarter of a mile from this gas compressor station, and before running for city council was
12 diagnosed with Stage 4 lung cancer. That insult, I believe, was from all the emissions over years.

13 There's also left out of what you showed in your map, but which is right behind the
14 compressor, on the other side of Olive at Riverside Drive, is a housing authority project with at least
15 350 families. I'm not sure the total number of children there. What really hit home for me on this
16 project actually wasn't when we started asking the gas company to move 5 years ago, it was about 5
17 months ago I was at a meeting at EP Foster Elementary School in the daytime. And one of the
18 parents that was there for that meeting came in in tears, and she said, I'm sorry I can't and I asked
19 her if I could do anything, and she told me that her 10 year old son had just been diagnosed with
20 leukemia. And this is a chronic problem at that school, all kinds of cancers but asthma, quick after
21 they enter the school – healthy central nervous system problems, chronic nosebleeds, visual
22 disturbances, all suddenly, after they begin attending school. And I think it's very important that
23 that be included in the environmental report.

24 I also believe that, I've looked a lot I can't guarantee I'm right, but I believe there is no gas
25 compressor in the country that sits 70 yards from an elementary school front door. I don't believe
26 there's another gas compressor in the country that sits less than a mile or a mile and a half from
27 where humans live and work. Those things I hope you will take very seriously in your environmental
28 review. Thank you.

29 **Brewster:** Thank you. Do you sure had your hand up, did you? Yes, we're and then at least ... then with
30 one more of a flat pass, maybe.

31 **??:** Okay, yeah, thank you.

32 **Grace:** Whenever you're ready.

33 **Tim Nastiger:** Hi, everyone, my name is Tim Nastiger. I've been working with the Westside Clean Air
34 Coalition for 4 years, over 4 years. We started our work together, and I live about a couple of blocks
35 from the compressor over here on Simpson. I think one of the things I want to talk about is how in
36 considering the public safety concerns that a number of folks have already raised, one of the reasons
37 that we in the neighborhood don't trust SoCalGas is because of how they went about this project in
38 the first place. We really found, as a number of people have mentioned, most of us found out about
39 this from looking at the NASA Flyover that show this massive, these massive leaks coming out of here

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1 and, as I understand it, SoCalGas didn't really do anything about it until NASA published those
2 results. After we started working on this issue in July of 2021, they had a massive, unplanned,
3 unplanned venting that a lot of people in the neighborhood – they didn't tell the fire department so
4 the only reason the fire department found out about it was because people are complaining in the
5 neighborhood, and they consistently try to downplay these impacts on our community. And so we're
6 really depending on the CPUC in this process to visibilize these issues and to hold SoCalGas
7 accountable for like – a lot of us still don't understand, like where all the pipes going, that that in
8 these on planned events, just dump gas into the neighborhood.

9 So we need to understand those things and to get, and ultimately, we need to get this out of
10 the neighborhood. So it's very important to consider the alternate sites. I was glad to see the map in
11 the documentation that you shared outlining those 3 sites. I think I really hope that this EIR includes
12 all of those sites. Thank you.

13 **Brewster:** Black mask had your hand up in the background right? And then maybe scanning. Thank
14 you.

15 **James Merrill:** Good evening in Zoom land. My name is James Merrill, and while I currently serve as
16 the president of the Ocean View Elementary School District, I am here speaking, not for my board,
17 but as a private citizen. Ocean View, where we live is down in South Oxnard, a marginalized
18 community of lower incomes and mostly people of color. I'm having a sense of déjà vu. In 2007, our
19 community rose up to speak out against the proposed development of a liquefied natural gas
20 pipeline that would run right past our neighborhoods, endangering neighbors and children and
21 potential school sites because they couldn't build a school site there now, if the gas line were that
22 close. So I'd like to just reinforce all the concerns that have been expressed by my neighbors up here
23 in Ventura, and also reinforce the idea that we really need to start weaning ourselves from an
24 extractive culture anyway. So while relocating is a great idea, not even doing, you know, not even
25 building infrastructure for a long future of continued use of petroleum products is a better idea.
26 And there have been a lot of concerns about the current status of this thing, and there might be an
27 argument from SoCalGas this will be the new and improved facility that doesn't have all those
28 negative effects. To quote one of my favorite songs, accidents never happen in a perfect world. This
29 is not a perfect world, so good luck to all of you. Thank you.

30 **Brewster:** Standing as planned and then next to **[inaudible - 01:01:24]** and we will probably get those
31 because **[inaudible]**. Thank you, thanks for being, patient **[inaudible]**

32 **Grace:** Whenever you're ready.

33 **Kristian Nunez:** Hi, everyone, I'm Kristian Nunez, I'm a policy advocate with CAUSE. This is Central
34 Coast Alliance United for Sustainable Economy. We are a social organization who works with
35 communities in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties with community members who are impacted
36 by polluting industries. I'm also a lifelong resident here of West Ventura. I lived here all my life and
37 live about 2 blocks away from the gas revisitation.

38 So today I'm here to urge that the environmental review process for this proposed expansion is
39 centered around those experiences and the health of our community. Part of my work as an

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1 advocate and as working with someone that's concerned residents here in West Ventura, you know,
2 I've been connecting with people on this project for years, most who have no idea that they live
3 near this [inaudible - 01:02:26], let alone the dangers it possesses to their health and the local
4 environment. And as someone who has lived here my entire life, I'm just super concerned about the
5 public safety risks, the long term health effects and the lack of transparency surrounding this
6 proposal.

7 So over the years, parents whose children attend nearby schools have reported higher rates of
8 respiratory issues like asthma along with reoccurring nosebleeds and just serious conditions that
9 raise red flags. So the question, I think, remains right, is, what does it mean for a child's future,
10 when their lungs are exposed to methane and toxic pollutants day after day during the most
11 important years of development and growth. The health risks to our community cannot be
12 dismissed, and, unlike most compressor stations in the nation, the Ventura facility is located
13 alarmingly close to sensitive areas in West Ventura. According to SoCalGas, only 3 of their tent
14 compressor stations located throughout California are within a quarter mile of homes, schools, or
15 parks, and the one here in Ventura is the only one situated directly across the street from an
16 elementary. The other 2 about a thousand feet away, the 3rd are around 6,000 feet away, which is
17 still way too close.

18 And, as I pointed out, you know, this site rates within the 99th percentile nationwide for the
19 number of people living near fishing. And so with, you know this in mind, you know, we shouldn't
20 treat West Ventura as just an industrial zone. It's a neighborhood filled with homes, schools, you
21 know, residents who have local businesses, culture, exactly. You know, to not only place community
22 members at harm to an expansion like this it would just be unacceptable. And so it is essential that
23 the environmental review for this project include a full and honest analysis of the public health
24 impacts, and that it explores realist narratives that put our community's well-being first.

25 So this could mean seriously considering cleaner and safer solutions which could be in
26 electrification, reducing the scale of operations at a site and, as mentioned before, relocating this
27 facility entirely to one of the alternatives that SoCalGas itself has already identified as possible
28 solutions. This community is not a sacrifice zone. Our neighborhood deserves bold actions that
29 protect our health and not deepen our harm. We are calling for solutions that respect our lives, our
30 safety, and our right to clean air where we live, work and raise our families. Thank you.

31 **Brewster:** Thank you. Yes, and then we'll spread. [inaudible - 01:04:55]

32 **Child 1:** This is me and Leo and we lived close to this place that is gonna blow up. And we want to stay
33 safe. And we want our chicks to stay safe because they're really cute and we really love them.

34 [inaudible]

35 **Child 2:** Where AP Foster lives, it's close where my old school was, and one of the kids there, they went
36 to my old school. And also it's close to my school now so it can like kill animals because the air it
37 getting more blacker because there's smoke and it kill the animals.

38 **Brewster:** Good job, miss. Thank you.

39 [inaudible]

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1 **Melissa Muñoz: [inaudible]** Melissa Muñoz and I work on the environmental impact team at
2 Patagonia, the Outdoor Clothing Company, based in Ventura. We employ more than 750 people at
3 our headquarters here in town, which is located just a mile and a half away from the SoCalGas
4 Ventura Compressor Station. Patagonia has been based in Ventura for the past 50 years. We are
5 deeply committed to this community and to the health and safety of our employees and their
6 families, including their children that attend our on-site child development centers.

7 We do not want this compressor station in our community and neither does the community. To
8 assess and minimize the community health and environmental risks of expanding this facility,
9 Patagonia urges the CPUC to conduct a complete environmental impact review. The EIR should
10 include studying public health and safety impacts. As you are aware, and many people have said
11 today, the compressor station is located in the middle of a densely populated urban neighborhood,
12 and right across the street from EP Foster Elementary School.

13 Given the risk of explosion and lack of buffer zone, we are very concerned about the health and
14 safety threats of children and nearby residents. It is also critical that the EIR study air quality and
15 greenhouse gas emission impacts of this project. As folks have mentioned, NASA has already
16 identified the Ventura Compressor Station as a super emitter of methane, and the site has a history
17 of leaks and contamination that lead to nosebleeds, headaches, and evacuation from children and
18 nearby residents. We are very concerned that expanding this compressor station will mean even
19 greater threats to clean air for EP Foster students and the neighboring community for the next 50
20 years.

21 Second, Patagonia urges the Commission to prioritize studying alternative locations for the
22 compressor station with less polluting designs. To be clear, Patagonia does not want this
23 compressor station anywhere in our community, but given the location of the compressor station in
24 an urban environment and near an elementary school, expanding the operation of this particular
25 site is a **[inaudible - 01:08:31]**. Rather than expand this facility, we believe SoCalGas should consider
26 moving the compressor station to an alternative site far from homes and children.

27 In addition to exploring alternative sites, the Commission needs to study fully electric and
28 smaller compressors that contribute less pollution and post fewer risks to communities. By allowing
29 more polluting equipment to be built in this community, the Commission is allowing a shameful
30 legacy of environmental injustices to continue. On behalf of Patagonia, and in solidarity with the
31 Westside residents of Ventura, I urge you to consider this an opportunity to remedy a legacy of
32 pollution on the West Side, and seriously evaluate relocating the project out of an already
33 overburdened community. Thank you.

34 **Brewster:** Thank you. Do we have many more in the room? There are about maybe 4 or 5 hands up on
35 Zoom also. I see 1, 2, 3, 4 right here in front. So we'll work through these next and then go to Zoom I
36 think.

37 **Julie:** I'm Julie on the east side of Ventura. When I first moved here a few years ago, one of the first
38 things I learned was that there was this gas compressor station in the middle of a overburdened
39 community, and the absurdity of it was, it's just appalling. It's appalling and absurd that SoCalGas

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1 would even consider expanding it. The audacity to have that sort of entitlement in the midst of a
2 neighborhood that is struggling on so many levels – it takes a certain sort of heartlessness to do
3 that, and I'm so glad that you've heard from so many people who have been able to talk about their
4 personal experience living near the compressor station.

5 I don't know what more evidence you would need to make a decision to protect the health of
6 this community. We have lived with sacrifice neighborhoods for decades, centuries. We have
7 devalued the value of people's lives and just brushed it off as the cost of doing business. I don't
8 know where humans get off thinking that that's okay. So I certainly hope that this impact on the
9 community gets full consideration because we have to do better as a society. We all matter.

10 **Brewster:** Thank you. [inaudible - 01:11:17]

11 **Melissa Munoz:** Good evening, my name is Melissa Munoz. I am a fellow with Climate 1st Replacing Oil
12 and Gas known as CFROG, and a lifelong resident of Ventura County. Through my work with CFROG
13 and ties to this community, I've had the opportunity and pleasure to meet community members and
14 residents living along the avenue who are most directly affected by this gas compressor station. I
15 vividly remember my first time canvassing these friendly neighborhoods, seeing kids play around,
16 when suddenly there was the gas compressor station. I'd learned about it, but I was truly baffled to
17 have seen it just a crosswalk away from EP Elementary School.

18 CFROG has visited the west side of Ventura to invite community members to informational
19 events and such. While meeting people in the area, we asked residents about their living
20 experiences and dangerous proximity to the compressor station. I heard very similar complaints –
21 nosebleeds, migraines – far too frequent, several people with asthma, children complaining of the
22 horrible smell, loud noises, and most of all feelings of unsafety.

23 I, too, experienced a very strange reaction to the unhealthy air quality with what felt like
24 allergies flaring, but very fast and very unpleasant. It almost felt difficult to breathe. It made me
25 really angry for all the nearby communities forced to put up with this environmental injustice. No
26 family should be put in harm's way or put at risk if some leak or blast were to occur.

27 I would again like to reference an alarming study conducted by NASA in 2017, identifying this
28 compressor in the backyard of many as a super emitter of methane. I would like to urge the
29 Commission to prioritize and keep in mind that the well-being of the people of Ventura lies in their
30 hands, and therefore a thorough study of an alternative location for this compressor station must
31 be done with plans for a significantly less polluting modern design or not at all, keeping in mind the
32 proposed site stands in the 99th percentile for communities near compressor stations in the entire
33 U.S. which includes schools, daycares and community spaces. The residents of Ventura, these
34 neighborhoods in particular, deserve better and need to be protected and heard. Thank you.

35 **Brewster:** Thank you.

36 **[Man]:** Can I say something off the record?

37 **Brewster:** You may be recorded.

38 **[Man]:** I see a lot of people here and there's Spanish speakers and stuff like that. But like, let's be real.
39 If this, if this, if the avenue wasn't gentrified, would we really care? That's all I'm asking because I

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1 see everybody here and they're Americanized. I don't see any Spanish speakers but I see a lot of
2 Spanish speakers walking around the avenue. I'm just curious.

3 **Brewster:** We have several Spanish speakers here.

4 **[Man]:** Yeah, one or two but I'm just curious, would we really care if it was just, you know,
5 marginalized if it was a Spanish or like, would we really care?

6 **??:** Yes. **[inaudible - 01:14:35]**

7 **[Man]:** Would we really? Who said yes, you?

8 **Hosts:** Okay sir, let's ... we're going to go back to comments. Thank you for that input. This is a chance
9 to provide public comment and thank you for your comments.

10 **[Man]:** ... be off the record.

11 **Hosts:** We have a few people in the room who are waiting for quite a while. Let's go here on the end.
12 Thanks.

13 **[inaudible]**

14 **Hosts:** Can you please respect this community space?

15 **[inaudible]**

16 **Brewster:** I'm so sorry. **[inaudible]** Whenever you're ready. **[inaudible]**

17 **Juan Lattes:** Okay, awesome. Hi, my name is Juan Lattes, project director at the Climate Central Coast
18 Climate Justice Network but today I'll be speaking as a citizen of Ventura. Every single person that I
19 talked to, folks who have lived on the West Side, you mentioned the compressor plant – folks don't
20 know, so you know, acknowledging earlier comments, the fact is a lot of folks just don't have that
21 awareness and I think that's kind of the power of this moment is to look at the inspiration of the
22 future. And when you think about this, this dichotomy between these old ways of generating,
23 storing, and transferring energy located across the street from children, youth who we're seeing
24 impacted as was shared by many people here, folks who are experiencing cancer, folks are
25 experiencing respiratory issues, my ask and my nudge to the CPUC is to lead with the alternative as
26 the only option.

27 This expansion is not necessary. As folks know, they're scared, they've either had impacts
28 already to themselves or their loved ones. But this is an opportunity to prioritize that future and
29 kind of close the door on the past. So with that little sidetracked for those of you know, in the room.
30 But yeah, thank you for your time and you know, I think that this is definitely an opportunity. If
31 there's going to be continued engagement, work with community based organizations, work with
32 folks in Spanish, make sure that we have that outreach because the community that's been here,
33 they don't know, and that is something that needs to be acknowledged. And that is something we
34 need to be changing so I invite all of us to join together and do that work. **[Spanish]** Gracias, and
35 thank you for your time.

36 **Brewster:** Thank you.

37 **Brewster:** She just finished speaking. **[inaudible - 01:17:37]**

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- 1 **Brewster:** We have one more, are you available? And then, essentially, I won't enforce the 2 min hard
2 rule. Just trying to keep it [inaudible] just to warn you.
- 3 **Raquel Torres:** Good evening, everyone. My name is Raquel. [inaudible] I appreciate my neighbor. She
4 knocked on my door and gave me a pamphlet. She spoke to me in English [inaudible] but that
5 doesn't mean that we are not concerned about the community. [inaudible] Because we're not here
6 doesn't mean we don't care, I'm here because I want my voice to be heard. I want to help in any
7 way I can. I read the pamphlet that you left me and I could understand a lot. [inaudible] We need to
8 [inaudible] the compressor station from [inaudible] sure what the next step to take. I can be a voice
9 with other people [inaudible].
- 10 **Brewster:** Okay, thank you on Zoom for being patient. We have maybe one more in here I see.
- 11 **Woodrow:** I can be concise.
- 12 **Brewster:** Thank you. And then we'll move to Zoom and pick you up there.
- 13 **Woodrow:** My name is Woodrow. I also live nearby. I'm a long time Ventura County native and I just
14 think this is really important opportunity to make everyone's voices heard, and to know that human
15 lives are invaluable and it takes an exact dollar amount for them to move that compressor. And
16 when you weigh those 2 things out together, obviously one of those is a lot easier to get done.
17 Everyone's lives, everyone deserves to grow old and happy and live very healthy lives. Everyone
18 deserves that opportunity. And as a scientist, these are the exact things that you can do in order to
19 get that to happen. Thank you.
- 20 **Brewster:** Thank you. Okay. Now I know we have some folks on Zoom who would like to speak, and I
21 get the sense that you may not be able to hear them because the sound will be coming from the
22 little computer here. So this is not ideal. And we will turn the volume up and I will move to the folks
23 on Zoom in the order of their hands being raised. Let's see, where are my hands? So Michael J.
24 Shapiro has had the hand up for a very long time, and would be first and then Lyra next. Now for
25 Michael Shapiro, are you able to unmute and interested in speaking up?
- 26 **Michael J. Shapiro:** I'm unmuted. Yes.
- 27 **Brewster:** Okay, you are unmuted and as I feared, this will not be audible in much of the room but we
28 will hear you at the front.
- 29 **Michael J. Shapiro:** Okay, shall I begin?
- 30 **Brewster:** Yes, please.
- 31 **Michael J. Shapiro:** All right. I'm Michael Shapiro. I live in the Ojai Valley. I'm also a founding member
32 of CFROG. SoCalGas Company's proposed new supersized natural gas compressor is located in the
33 heart of a West Ventura community that we all know has already suffered grotesque environmental
34 abuse and degradation from the oil and gas industry for decades. That the proposed new supersized
35 gas compressor is located across the street from the EP Foster Elementary School, I think, is akin to
36 child abuse and frankly and realistically, I think criminal charges should be looked into very seriously
37 if this project is moved forward for the obvious reasons. The proposed supersized gas compressor
38 would be double the size of the current existing compressor, and that would obviously increase the

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1 toxic pollution that already is generated. It's bad enough that in 2017, NASA identified the current
2 compressor station as a soup quote, "super emitter of methane" and SoCalGas now wants to
3 expand that kind of polluting menace. Studies have also shown that the compressors currently
4 emitted methane gas travels on the prevailing winds all the way up and into the Ojai Valley itself
5 and the folks in Ojai find it unacceptable to increase unhealthful methane pollution there. The
6 project is also an environmental justice issue, because it will unequivocally cause an otherwise
7 avoidable harm. Once and for all it's time to finally remedy a legacy of pollution and industrial
8 degradation in Ventura's west side community. Thank you.

9 **Brewster:** Thank you. Thank you for your comment. Moving. I think, I'm not sure that I would do
10 justice by summarizing – Mr. Shapiro is against the project and it is environmental justice harm. The
11 recording and the transcript from Zoom will be posted as part of this scoping report, so his words
12 will be available for you to peruse after. We, I'm going to pause the Zoom public comment period
13 here for a moment and thank you, Mr. Shapiro, for your comments. We have a couple more hands
14 up online and I think I'll take a moment to say thank you to everyone in the room for being here.
15 And we value your input. This is a period of analysis for us, where we take the information that
16 you've given us, we go back to work on preparing the environmental impact report. We will be
17 documenting the concerns and providing as much information as we can in as easily digestible a
18 format as possible for the environmental impact report to be complete and compliant.

19 I want to be, I want to be frank, though, that for the folks on Zoom, people in the room will not
20 be able to hear you. The room is too large and we don't have a PA system at this meeting. Perhaps
21 we need to have a more robust audio visual system for everyone in the room to hear online as well
22 as in-person comments, and that will be something that we look forward to when it comes time for
23 the draft EIR and we have more public meetings at that point in the process.

24 So I want to close with that commitment and the folks on Zoom, we are here and we are going
25 to work through your comments. I just wanted you to hear that. Unfortunately, in the room here at
26 the Bell Arts Factory, it's almost impossible to hear you just because of the way things are set up.
27 Comments will be recorded it says on our screen, So with that, I'm ready to move on to more Zoom
28 comments and for anyone who wants to come close and listen in, please do, and for others, thank
29 you and we hope to see you again. Thank you.

30 Okay, so back to Zoom, 3 more hands raised on Zoom. Is that right?

31 Yes.

32 Okay, thank you.

33 **[inaudible - 01:27:49]**

34 **[???:** Good afternoon. We have interpretation for this event and to record your messages. Is there
35 anyone that wants to give the comment in Spanish? We can interpret for you. **[Spanish]**

36 **01:27:59 [inaudible]**

37 **Grace:** Okay, Lyra, I'm going to go ahead and allow you to unmute yourself so you can unmute yourself
38 when you're ready and then please start your comment.

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1 **Lyra Cabanban:** Thank you. Okay. Good evening Commission staff. My name is Lyra and I'm a student
2 at Oxnard College and a fellow at CFROG. As an older sister to younger siblings, the idea of
3 expanding this dangerous compressor station located across the street from an elementary school is
4 deeply concerning. And so I'm here today to urge you to do a few things.

5 First, I'm urging you to thoroughly study and consider the public safety concerns related to this
6 proposed expansion in the Environmental Impact Report. Compressor stations are at a high risk of
7 explosion and put hundreds of children and families within what's called an incineration zone,
8 meaning that if an explosion were to ever occur, anyone in the surrounding zone would be
9 immediately incinerated.

10 Furthermore, SoCalGas, the operator proposing this expansion, is the same operator
11 responsible for the 2015 Aliso Canyon disaster, the largest natural gas blowout in U.S. history. How
12 can we trust that SoCalGas can responsibly manage and operate their facilities and prevent a
13 disaster like this from happening in our community?

14 The second thing I'm urging the Commission to do is to study alternative locations for this
15 compressor station that are located far away from home, schools and businesses. I am also urging
16 the Commission to explore less polluting designs for this compressor station that rely on clean
17 energy and electric sources as opposed to fossil fuels. Thank you.

18 **Brewster:** Thank you for that. [inaudible - 01:31:05] Moving to Molly.

19 **Molly McCoy:** Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Molly McCoy and I'm calling in tonight as a
20 lifelong Ventura County Resident, and in solidarity with the Westside Clean Air Coalition Climate First
21 Replacing Oil and Gas. First, thank you so much for this hybrid, the comment opportunity, and
22 allowing everyone to share their voices on this critical project. We'd also like to echo the calls to
23 improve community outreach, to ensure that everyone is aware of what SoCalGas is trying to build
24 behind their backyards and playgrounds.

25 The last thing we need is to prolong our dependence on fossil fuels which will only worsen the
26 surrounding air and noise pollution. We completely understand that there's an existing gas
27 infrastructure network designed to support the site and that California's energy needs are only
28 going to continue to grow. But I also know that California has a looming deadline to electrify and
29 decarbonize its electric grid by 2045. So why are we trying to expand the station, in the first place,
30 rather than exploring scientifically proven renewable alternatives that will safely and equitably
31 transition away from an oil and gas economy, especially given the immediate need to address the
32 climate crisis and environmental injustice implications.

33 The west side of Ventura has been legally recognized as a Senate Bill 535 disadvantaged
34 community. It has a high level of environmental pollutant burdens as per CalEnviroScreen 4.0, not
35 just from the SoCalGas site, but highway 33, the nearby agricultural and oil and gas fields.

36 The project EIR must reflect this reality in the community's health and safety concerns if the
37 Commission is going to truly follow environmental justice procedures. 4 years ago as a high school
38 senior, when I first learned about the plans to expand the compressor station and saw it in person, I
39 was shocked by how close the station was to EP Foster Elementary School and so many homes.

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1 Now, as a graduating environmental policy college student, I am still just as shocked that despite
2 the many State statutes and programs designed to protect frontline communities, this project is still
3 under serious consideration.

4 We join the many people tonight urging you the Commission to fully evaluate the compressor's
5 impacts and keep the community's best interests in mind, not just corporate ones. Please don't turn
6 away from your constituents and deny them the right to a clean, healthy, and safe neighborhood.
7 Thank you for your time.

8 **Brewster:** Thank you for your comments, and thank you for being patient. And next up would be Laura.

9 **Laura Rosenberger Haider:** Hello! This is Laura Rosenberger Haider of Residents Against Fracking. A
10 2017 study identified 70 different air pollutants in compressor station emissions, a 2019 study
11 found that 39 of the chemicals released are linked to cancer. A 2021 study found alarming levels of
12 volatile organic compounds, including cancer-causing benzene in the indoor air of homes located
13 near a compressor station in Ohio and I heard also that radiation was emitted by the Ventura
14 Compressor Station or radioactive pipe scale was emitted, I need some more details of that.
15 Hopefully it's in the report, and also it ... the whole natural gas infrastructure has problems and
16 that's why I think we should stop extracting oil and gas in the first place. All right. And they think it'll
17 get worse with deregulation.

18 The 2022 study of natural gas gathering lines showed leakage 4 to 13 times higher than the
19 highest estimate derived from ground-based surveys and in the 2022 study of the methane
20 emissions from natural gas gathering pipelines in the Permian basin found leakage rates 14 through
21 52 times higher than the U.S. EPA's national estimate for gathering lines and also this unsafe
22 because the 2022 study of gas pipelines found that between 2002 and 2021, I think, in the United
23 States, the gas pipeline incidents caused at least a thousand injuries and 227 fatalities. And this is
24 from ... there's a lot more incidents of pipeline disasters and carbon capture projects that did fail to
25 capture the it. I think it would also failed to capture, to keep the natural gas underground also. I'm
26 still looking into that. The natural gas explosion in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts.

27 Alright. Let's get on this. The reference of this is Concerned Health Professionals **[inaudible -**
28 **01:36:09]** Medical Findings Demonstrating the Risks and Harms of Fracking. 2023 Ninths Edition.
29 Thanks.

30 **Brewster:** Thank you for your comments. If you have this information in writing and would submit it to
31 the email address, that will be helpful too. I appreciate the input here.

32 **Laura Rosenberger Haider:** Some of it's in the chat.

33 **Brewster:** Excellent. This is the last raise hand and I see no more on Zoom at this moment so I believe
34 we will close this hybrid portion of the meeting. Thank you all for your attention online, and thank
35 you for your patience while we have the presentation in the room here in Ventura. Please
36 comments in writing before April 30th would be the most helpful, and we look forward to hearing
37 from you in that format. We'll close it off and at this point, good night.

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ZOOM CHAT CONVERSATIONS

Copy of: "meeting_saved_chat.txt"

19:01:25 From Laura Rosenberger Haider to Hosts and panelists:

I oppose the Ventura Compressor because the community near the station should not continue to experience unannounced releases of toxic chemicals that lead to nosebleeds and headaches.

19:22:36 From Laura Rosenberger Haider to Hosts and panelists:

A 2019 study found that compressor stations released 39 carcinogenic chemicals including benzene. (p 478*)"A 2022 study of methane emissions from natural gas gathering pipelines in the Permian Basin found leakage rates 14- 52 times higher than the U.S. EPA's national estimate for gathering lines...". (p. 478-479*)

19:34:11 From Laura Rosenberger Haider to Hosts and panelists:

Let's stop extracting oil and gas. "A 2022 study of gas pipelines found that between 2002- 2021, gas pipeline incidents caused at least 1000 injuries and 227 fatalities" (p479). It could get worse when federal regulations are not enforced.

* Reference: Concerned Health Professionals of New York and Physicians for Social Responsibility, "Compendium of Scientific, Medical, and Media Findings Demonstrating Risks and Harms of Fracking and Associated Gas and Oil Infrastructure (Ninth Edition)," October 2023, <http://concernedhealthny.org/compendium/> : <https://concernedhealthny.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/CHPNY-Fracking-Science-Compendium-9.pdf>

19:40:54 From Alyssa to Hosts and panelists:

(I have a crying baby with me so no mic) Hi, my name is Alyssa and I am a concerned resident of 30 years. I grew up by the oil fields on Ventura Avenue and I had regular nosebleeds when I was a kid. I attended EP Foster Elementary School and I also went to the Boys and Girls Club after school.

My biggest concern with this project is how close the site is to the places that we send our youngest children. The compressor site, a super emitter of methane, is located right across the street on N Olive St. Our kids deserve better.

With all of the recent modernization developments across Ventura, approving the expansion of this site would be an environmental injustice to the community on Ventura Avenue. While knowing the health and environmental risks expressed by the community tonight, approving this project would be a huge step backwards.

Please consider moving this project far away and rezoning the land next to our schools, thank you.