

Sample Support Letter – Senate Bill 1300

Please send a support letter – On your letter head
Send by email viviana.becerra@sen.ca.gov or Fax (916) 327-1997

Date _____

Honorable Loni Hancock (D-09)
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2082
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 1300(Support)

Dear Senator Hancock,

[Name of Your Organization] is writing in support of Senate Bill 1300 (Hancock) that requires refineries to annually report their schedule for “turnarounds” to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) on September 15. It would also require them to provide Cal/OSHA, upon their request, with access on site and documentation on refinery safety and infrastructure.

Under existing law, neither the state nor local government is required to be informed by an oil refinery when it is going to perform a “turnaround.” A “turnaround” is a partial or total shutdown of any unit of an oil refinery for certain purposes including maintenance, repair, or inspection.

According to the American Petroleum Institute (API), “turnarounds” are a necessary part of refinery operations. They can last anywhere from one week to four. They are usually scheduled at least one or two years in advance. The API admits that “refinery incidents are more likely to occur” during turnarounds than during normal operations.”

Despite the obvious importance of “turnarounds” to, Cal/OSHA is often unaware of when one will occur at an oil refinery. This prevents Cal/OSHA from preparing for a possible incident during a scheduled refinery “turnaround.” It also means Cal/OSHA inspectors are left unaware when the last “turnaround” was done while preparing for and performing inspection of refinery facilities.

This is not an abstract concern. Chevron Corp. did not inspect several sections of piping of its Richmond refinery during a November 2011 “turnaround.” One of the sections had thinned in thickness by 80 percent, which contributed to the August 6, 2012 fire at the facility, one of the worst of such incidents in recent years, which led to the hospitalization of 15,000 Richmond residents.

Had Cal/OSHA known that Chevron had not inspected that section of piping during its last “turnaround,” it is possible that Cal/OSHA inspectors could have done their own inspection. Doing so could have prevented an incident that threatened public health, affected the environment, and imposed severe financial costs upon Chevron

SB 1300 simply requires annual reports of scheduled turnarounds.

Optional: Include sentences about why this is important to your organization.

Sincerely,