

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 1661 (Bryan)
As Introduced January 29, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires the Department of Conservation (DOC) to allocate the first \$5 million deposited in the Equitable Community Repair and Reinvestment Account (Account) to Los Angeles (LA) County to provide cash assistance to families living near the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF).

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires DOC to, upon appropriation by the Legislature and subject to the terms of the appropriation, distribute the first \$5 million deposited into the Account to LA County to disburse in direct cash assistance to families living within 2 ½ miles of the identified low-production oil wells who have children with respiratory health conditions.
- 2) Prohibits funds from the Account from being distributed to other project categories authorized under existing law until the \$5 million in cash assistance has been distributed

COMMENTS

AB 2716 (Bryan), Chapter 549, Statutes of 2024, prohibits the operation of low-production oil and gas wells located in the IOF and imposes a \$10,000 per month penalty upon these wells if they remain in low-production for more than 12 months until they are plugged and abandoned. All penalty revenue is deposited into the Account to fund projects, such as park creation and

The IOF is surrounded by residential areas, schools, and homes and, according to the LA Times, more than one million people live within 5 miles of the IOF. Residents living near oil fields have long reported adverse health effects such as respiratory, reproductive and cardiovascular issues. In the LA area, many of these risks disproportionately affect low-income communities and communities of color.

This bill requires DOC, upon appropriation by the Legislature and subject to the terms of the appropriation, to distribute the first \$5 million deposited into the Account to LA County for direct cash assistance to families living within 2½ miles of the identified low-production wells whose children have respiratory health conditions and can verify their residence to LA County.

According to the Author

Communities living next to active oil fields continue to experience disproportionately high rates of respiratory illness. Families in these neighborhoods are routinely exposed to harmful air pollutants, as well as chronic noise and vibration associated with oil drilling operations. AB 1661 ensures that the first \$5 million deposited into the Equitable Community Repair and Reinvestment Account, established under AB 2716, will be given as direct cash assistance to families living within 2.5 miles of the IOF who have a child with a respiratory health condition.

Arguments in Support

A group of public health and environmental justice groups write that the communities surrounding the IOF are predominantly Black and Latine. Black people are 75% more likely to

live in communities near toxic facilities like chemical plants and oil refineries. This applies to the mostly Black communities close to the IOF. The health and safety of residents living near the field are top concerns for our organizations and the communities we represent. AB 1661 is an opportunity to hold polluters accountable for the decades of harm they have caused to frontline communities. This can serve as a meaningful example of environmental reparations and position California as a leader in addressing past harm from the oil and gas industry. For these reasons, we respectfully request your support for AB 1661.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, DOC estimates costs of approximately \$477,000 in year one followed by \$441,000 in ongoing annual costs (Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Administrative Fund) to hire one supervisor and two analysts to develop program guidelines (including defining criteria for fund eligibility), provide support and guidance to LA County, and audit the county's compliance with state guidelines.

By requiring a set-aside for direct cash assistance from the Account, this bill creates a one-time cost pressure of \$5 million on the Account, the General Fund, or some other potential funding source to the extent there is insufficient funding for all eligible families or DOC is unable to allocate this funding to other authorized project categories, such as park creation or expansion and maintenance of new outdoor amenities in park-poor neighborhoods, urban greening, affordable housing needed to accommodate community needs, climate mitigation and resilience, and community benefit projects with environmental co-benefits.

VOTES

ASM NATURAL RESOURCES: 10-1-3

YES: Bryan, Connolly, Garcia, Haney, Kalra, Boerner, Pellerin, Schultz, Wicks, Zbur

NO: Macedo

ABS, ABST OR NV: Ellis, Alanis, Hoover

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-2-2

YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

NO: Dixon, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover, Ta

UPDATED

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