

Date of Hearing: April 20, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2711 (Ellis) – As Introduced February 20, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Oil and gas: notice of intention

**SUMMARY:** Extends the amount of time the supervisor of the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) has to respond to a written notice of intention (NOI) to commence drilling and requires a denial to be accompanied with a comprehensive reason for the denial.

**EXISTING LAW** requires the operator of any well, before commencing the work of drilling the well, to file with the supervisor of CalGEM or the district deputy a NOI to commence drilling. Prohibits drilling from commencing until approval is given by the supervisor or the district deputy. Provides that if the supervisor or the district deputy fails to give the operator written response to the NOI within 10 working days from the date of receipt, that failure is considered as an approval of the notice and the notice, for the purposes and intents of this chapter, shall be deemed a written report of the supervisor. (Public Resources Code 3203)

**THIS BILL:**

- 1) Extends the amount of time the supervisor or the district deputy has from 10 days to 30 days from the date of receipt of the NOI to give the operator an approval or denial of the NOI.
- 2) Requires, if the NOI is denied by the supervisor or the district deputy within 30 working days from the date of receipt, the supervisor or district deputy to include in the denial a comprehensive reason for why the notice was denied.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:**

1) **Author's statement:**

California is facing a serious energy security crisis as in-state oil and gas production declines and refineries shut down. Robust domestic production has never been more critical to protect working families from shortages, price spikes, and reliance on volatile, dirty, and unsafe overseas supplies.

Unfortunately, loopholes in the current drilling permit process have allowed approval times for Notices of Intention to drill to balloon from just days to many months—or even years. These excessive delays are stifling production at the very moment California needs it most.

AB 2711 closes these loopholes by requiring CalGEM to approve or deny a Notice of Intention within 30 working days of receipt. This common-sense reform will restore predictability and efficiency to the permitting process, strengthen our

energy independence, and help safeguard California families and businesses from supply disruptions.

- 2) **Notices of Intention.** In California, a developer that wants to drill, expand, rework, or plug a traditional well must file a NOI to request and obtain CalGEM's approval to drill before commencing operations. NOIs for new wells require various information such as the depth and elevation and well type, an assessment of the presence of freshwater or underground drinking water, and whether the location is in an urban area or near environmentally sensitive areas. Operators must also describe blowout prevention equipment and drilling fluids and disposal methods to be used, as well as technical details related to casing and cement usage, proposed work plan, and abandonment plan. A complete NOI must include evidence that the operator has satisfied local permitting requirements and CEQA requirements.

Under current law, CalGEM has 10 days to respond to an operator's NOI before drilling or re-entering an oil or gas well. If CalGEM does not respond within that timeframe, the NOI is deemed approved.

According to UC Berkeley's Center for Law, Energy, and Environment paper *Law and Policy Options to Facilitate a Phase-Out of Fossil Fuel Production in California* (April 2020), in practice, many NOI reviews are processed and permitted well within the statutory period, with typical responses often occurring in about a week or less (within 5-7 business days).

After receiving approval, an operator must begin operations within 24 months or else the NOI expires.

- 3) **This bill.** The author argues that full approval or denial can then take months to years, significantly delaying drilling permit processing. This bill extends the amount of time the supervisor or the district deputy has to 30 days from the date of receipt of the NOI to give the operator an approval or denial of the NOI.
- 4) **Committee amendments.** The *committee may wish to consider* amending the bill to change the denial explanation from "comprehensive" to "rational."

#### **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

##### **Support**

California Independent Petroleum Association

##### **Opposition**

Central California Environmental Justice Network

**Analysis Prepared by:** Paige Brokaw / NAT. RES. /