

Debbie Arnold's Testimony

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Debbie Arnold. I am a county Supervisor in San Luis Obispo County, representing the 5th District. I want to begin my remarks by stating that I am not opposed to constructing new energy projects. However, I want to express some concerns with the proposal of offshore wind farms off our coast.

First, I have questions and concerns about the onshore infrastructure needed to support a wind farm. Second, when a wind farm is fully operational, I am concerned about the impact of and damage to the ecosystem, especially the sea birds. Third, I have questions about whether wind farms can provide dependable baseline power 24/7. Additionally, we need to know more about battery storage, specifically whether it will be necessary and, if so, how the hazardous waste associated with the batteries will be addressed. And finally, I question how a proposed wind farm will affect our fishing industry.

I also want to say that I find it challenging to promote policy that forces the closure of a locally operating nuclear power plant while simultaneously advocating for the construction of a wind farm. Ultimately the ratepayers, who are citizen taxpayers, will be paying millions to decommission Diablo Canyon and millions more to construct a wind farm.

I understand California has an energy shortage that needs to be addressed, and I believe a wind energy farm off our coast could help solve this bipartisan challenge. But only if we consider the public's concerns. I hope that the policy decisions promoted today will be effective in helping to provide reliable, affordable, and abundant clean energy now and in the future.