

Congresswoman Katie Hill Statement for the Record

In 2015 and 2016, for a period of 118 days, a single-pipe storage well at Aliso Canyon Gas storage facility leaked tens of thousands of tons of natural gas into the air. Eight thousand families were forced to evacuate from their homes, and many suffered health conditions like headaches and nosebleeds. Some suffered worse. The incident incurred an estimated \$1 billion in damages and was one of the worst environmental disasters in history, the equivalent annual pollution output of almost 600,000 cars. Data mandated by the Department of Transportation indicates that more than 10,000 wells nationwide rely on a single-pipe design, and that 296 underground storage facilities across 32 states utilize such wells. We know that these designs are not the safest or most secure -- let Aliso serve as a warning, we need to be working towards implementing stronger solutions in those currently operating storage facilities.

Aliso Canyon's gas leak was the worst single natural gas leak in U.S. history in terms of its environmental impact. Its carbon footprint was larger than the Deepwater Horizon leak.

The release of the full root cause analysis was quite concerning. Among oil and gas production wells, gas storage wells did not confine fluid flow to the inner tubing, but also allowed flow in the annulus between the casing and the tubing providing no protection from leakage in the event of casing failure. The casing failed, and the ensuing leak poisoned the community. Processes and procedures were not in place to ensure safe operation. There were certainly shortcomings in regulatory oversight; some have been corrected, while others are in the process of being corrected. One such correction, [S.B. 380](#), was passed in May 2016 by the CA legislature to implement regulations on Aliso Canyon.

The LA County Department of Public Health and its contractors have already conducted some health study work. There has been some health study work already conducted by the LA County Department of Public Health and its contractors (at UCLA). This is ongoing through efforts by the South Coast Air Quality Management District and LA County Department of Public Health funded in part by legal settlements. These efforts are after-the-fact, however; it would have been better to research and regulate proactively. Some of the public health questions raised by Aliso Canyon may never be answered.

This is not just about the health and safety of Porter Ranch residents, although that is of critical importance to us; this is also about ensuring that in the future there are rapid response plans in place for giant leaks, no delays in bringing necessary equipment to stop a spotted leak, and state regulators who take a hands-on approach and do not ignore risks.

Above all, we now know that Aliso could have been prevented. We know that countless families could have been spared hardship and that the rippling environmental impacts could have been avoided. We also know that this should never and can never happen again. We know that we can do better for the people who count on us. And we will.