

CALIFORNIA REFINERY & GASOLINE CRISIS

Facts, Figures & Consequences

Legislative Briefing Session

February 11, 2026

Sacramento, California

Professor Michael A. Mische

University of Southern California

Disclosures & Disclaimers

Disclaimer & Statement of Independence

This document represents the independent work, analysis, perspectives, representations, and opinions of the author. It does not, in any manner, explicitly or implicitly, reflect, represent, or describe the views, opinions, policies, and/or positions of the University of Southern California, and/or its respective faculty, employees, administration, or students. In creating and presenting this work, the author has made all reasonable attempts to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the data, attribution to data sources, analysis, and calculations. Nonetheless, variances in data and presentation may exist to some degree. In the author's opinion, such variances will not materially change the tenor, trajectories, impressions, interpretations, conclusions, or possible implications associated with the data, data sources, and the related analysis and conclusions herein.

The work presented herein is provided for informational, research, discussion, policy, and educational purposes. In performing this work, the author has not received any special compensation and has no promise or anticipation of any compensation for the work presented herein. This work and the author are entirely independent and not affiliated with, in any form, and are not advocating on behalf of or representing any petroleum company, organization, or foreign entity. No funding from any external sources, entities, agents, or associations was received, advanced, promised or granted for the work presented herein. No funding for this study has been provided by the University of Southern California. This study is entirely self-financed by the author.

Data Sources and Methods

The research used in this work is widely available and includes but is not limited to verifiable sources such as the California Energy Commission, U.S. Energy Information Agency, Bloomberg, U.S. Department of Energy, SEC filings, International Energy Agency, Oil & Gas Journal, American Petroleum Institute, the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, the U.S. EPA, California Air Resources Board, Statista, California Attorney General's Office, California Legislative Analyst's Office, U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Labor Statistics, California DMV, California Geologic Energy Management Division, and the U.S. Oil and Gas Association.

Acknowledgments

Appreciation is expressed to Professor James Rector and Graduate Student Joseph Silvi, of the University of California, Berkeley, for their research and study of California crude oil and gasoline production.

For additional information or inquiries, please contact:

- Professor Michael A. Mische
 - University of Southern California, Marshall School of Business
 - Email: mische@marshall.usc.edu

Table of Contents

CALIFORNIA REFINERY & GASOLINE CRISIS *Facts, Figures & Consequences*

<u>Section</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1.0	Status
2.0	Crude Oil Production & Imports
3.0	California Crude Oil & Gasoline Consumption
4.0	California In-State Gasoline Production Supply Shortfalls
5.0	Why Are Refiners Electing to Exit California?
6.0	Call to Action: Gasoline Supply & Price Stabilization Blueprint
7.0	Additional Resources



Section 1.0 Status

STATUS

- **California has “lost” two major refineries representing approximately 284,000 barrels a day in refining capacity.**
 - Phillips 66 is shutdown (139,000 b/d)
 - Valero is shutdown (145,000 b/d)
- **There is no incentive for these refineries to reopen and there is no incentive for any other operator to acquire or enter the state.**
- **Since 2020, California refinery capacity for CARB fuels has declined by approximately 22%.**
- **California has also “lost” the San Pablo Bay pipeline (Crimson) due to lack of sufficient product and recurring financial losses resulting in more tanker trucks and higher costs.**
- **California in-state crude production a 45-year record low for 2025.**
- **Demand for gasoline in California is showing resiliency and is not declining at the rates expected by the CEC or CARB.**

STATUS

- **California in-state crude production hit 45-year record low for 2025.**
- **Both crude oil and gasoline imports from non-U.S. sources have reached historical highs.**
- **Demand for gasoline in California is showing resiliency and is not declining at the rates expected by the CEC or CARB.**
- **EV adoption rates and the “Demand Destruction” effect have been significantly overstated by both CEC and CARB.**
 - **CARB Scoping Plan showed a targeted 47% reduction in gasoline consumption by 2030. Actual is far less.**
 - **EVs displaced around 3.5% of gasoline demand in 2024, and a projected 4.9% by 2030. (Stillwater)**
 - **In contrast, internal combustion vehicle gas mileage improvements have resulted in reductions in consumption by 88 to 105 million gallons.**

Status: Meanwhile CA Prices are Increasing

CA Retail Prices Remain the Highest of All Lower 48 States

- The AAA price of gasoline in California on 2/9/26 was \$4.478 or 54% higher than the national average of \$2.902
 - On 2/4/26 the AAA price was 52% than the national average.
 - On 12/17/25 the AAA price was \$4.34 a gallon or 50% higher than the national average.
 - In some counties, the price is approaching \$6.00 a gallon.
- From 2015 to 2026, the average annual price differential or “California Premium” between U.S. average prices and California average prices increased 10% from 1.27 to 1.40.
 - As of February 2026, the percentage increase is 12.5%.
- Based on the AAA average price of \$4.478 a gallon, California taxes, fees and regulatory costs represent 28% of the retail price.

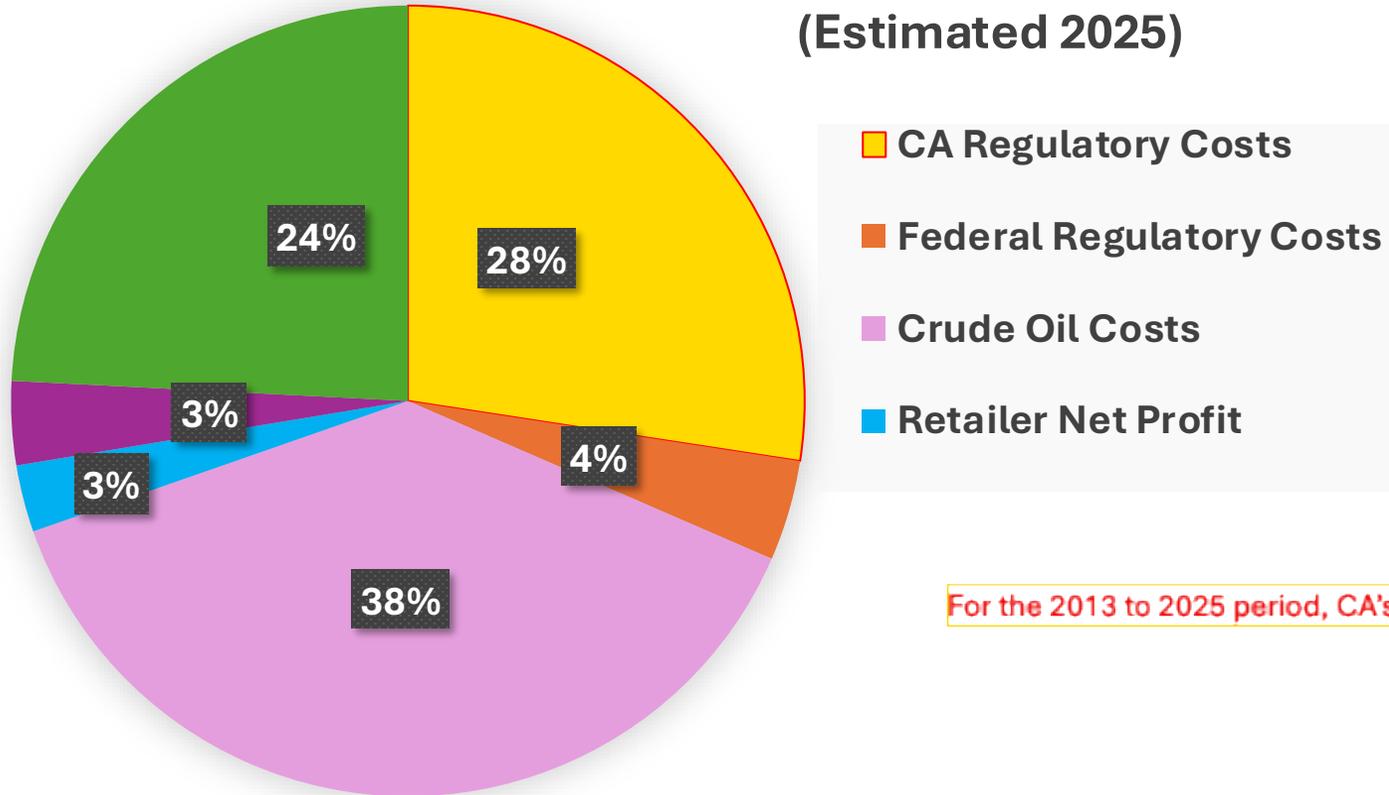
CA Retail Prices Would Be Higher...Except For

CA consumers are benefiting from the Trump Administration's energy policies.; Since 1/20/25:

- U.S. oil production has reached an average of 13.43 million barrels a day with expectations for record highs for 2026.
- The Brent price for crude oil has fallen by 13%.
- OPEC8+ increased oil production by as much as 34% to 550,000 barrels a day.
- Trump rescission of California’s 2035 ban on the sale of internal combustion engines
- Elimination of certain CAFÉ, tail pipe emissions and fuel standards and revocation of California’s waiver to set its own emission standards and phases out the ZEVs and EV mandates under the Big Beautiful Bill enacted on July 4, 2025.
- Supreme Court ruling that producers have standing and can litigate against the EPA and regulators over approvals of California emission standards.
- The most recent consensus is that crude oil prices will remain around or below \$70 a barrel for the duration of 2025 (but anything can happen in the oil industry).
 - On 2./10/26, the price of Brent crude was \$67.57 **down** 11% from 2025

Highlight: Distribution of Retail Price Components

Distribution of Retail Price Components
(Estimated 2025)



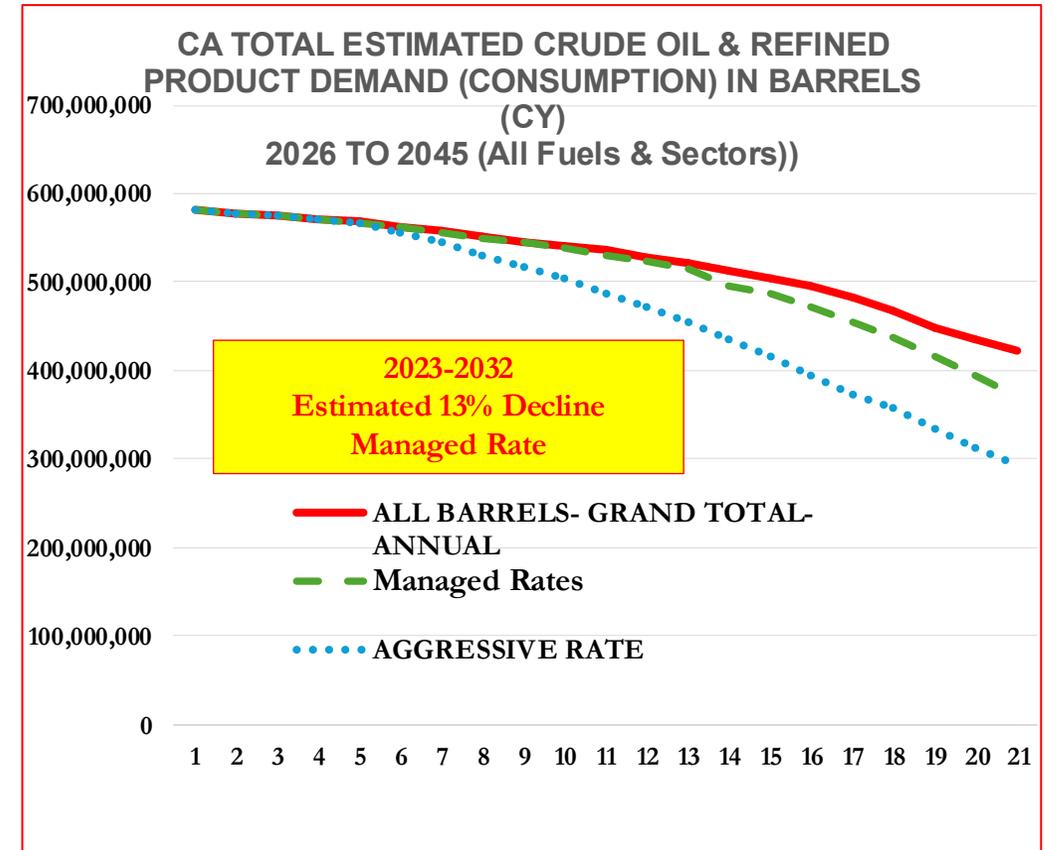
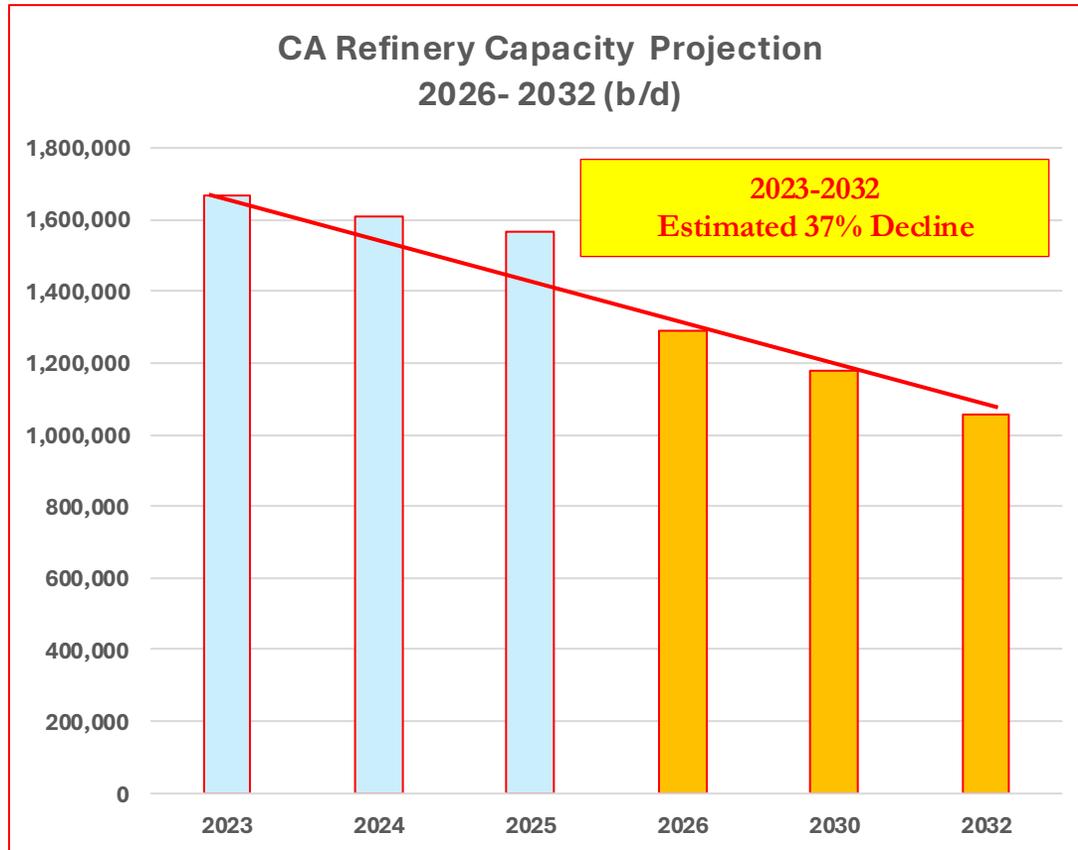
Regulatory Costs to Consumers	
Regulatory Costs Per Gallon	Cost
CA State Excise Tax	0.612
CA Local Taxes (3.12%)	0.13
CA Cap & Trade	0.26
CA LCFS	0.105
CA Underground Storage Tank	0.02
CA Seasonal Blend	0.12
	1.247
Federal Excise	0.18
Total Regulatory Costs	1.427

For the 2013 to 2025 period, CA's state excise tax on gasoline increased 55%

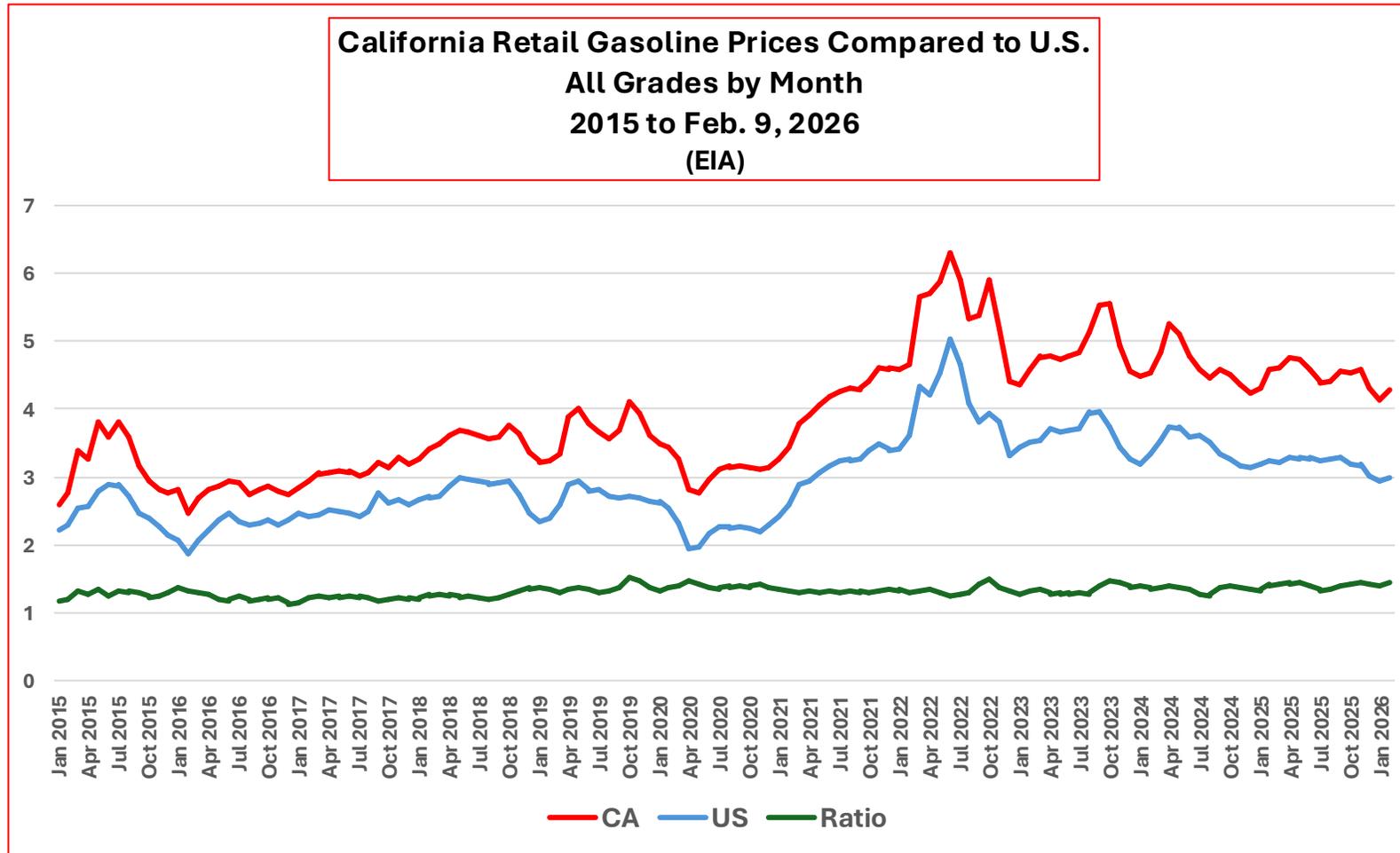
Introduction: Since 2020 California's Gross Refinery Capacity Has Declined 21%...with more likely by CYE 2026

ESTIMATED CALIFORNIA REFINERY PRODUCTION 2023 -2026 (Adjusted for planned shutdowns)				
CA Refinery Capacity- CARB Fuels Only	2023	2024	2025	2026(e)
Marathon Petroleum Corp., Los Angeles Refinery	363,000	365,000	365,000	365,000
Chevron U.S.A. Inc., El Segundo Refinery	285,000	285,000	285,000	285,000
Chevron U.S.A. Inc., Richmond Refinery	245,271	245,271	245,271	245,271
PBF Energy, Torrance Refinery*	160,000	160,000	160,000	160,000
PBF Energy, Martinez Refinery*	156,400	156,400	156,400	156,400
Valero Energy, Benicia Refinery	145,000	145,000	145,000	0
Phillips 66, Los Angeles Refinery	139,000	139,000	100,000	0
Valero Energy, Wilmington Refinery	90,200	85,000	85,000	85,000
Kern Energy, Bakersfield Refinery	85,000	26,000	26,000	26,000
Gross Total-Refinery Capacity- B/D	1,668,871	1,606,671	1,567,671	1,322,671
Adjustment for Planned Maintenance & Turnaround				276,640
Estimated Net Refinery Production				1,046,031
Percentage Change		-3.73%	-2.43%	-15.63%
Cumulative Percent Change in Gross Refinery Production 2023-2026				-20.74%
Cumulative Percent Change in Net Refinery Production 2023-2026				-37.32%

California Refinery Capacity: Estimated 37% Decline by 2032 vs. Estimated 13-15% in Consumption



California Gasoline Prices





Section 2.0

California Crude Oil Production & Imports

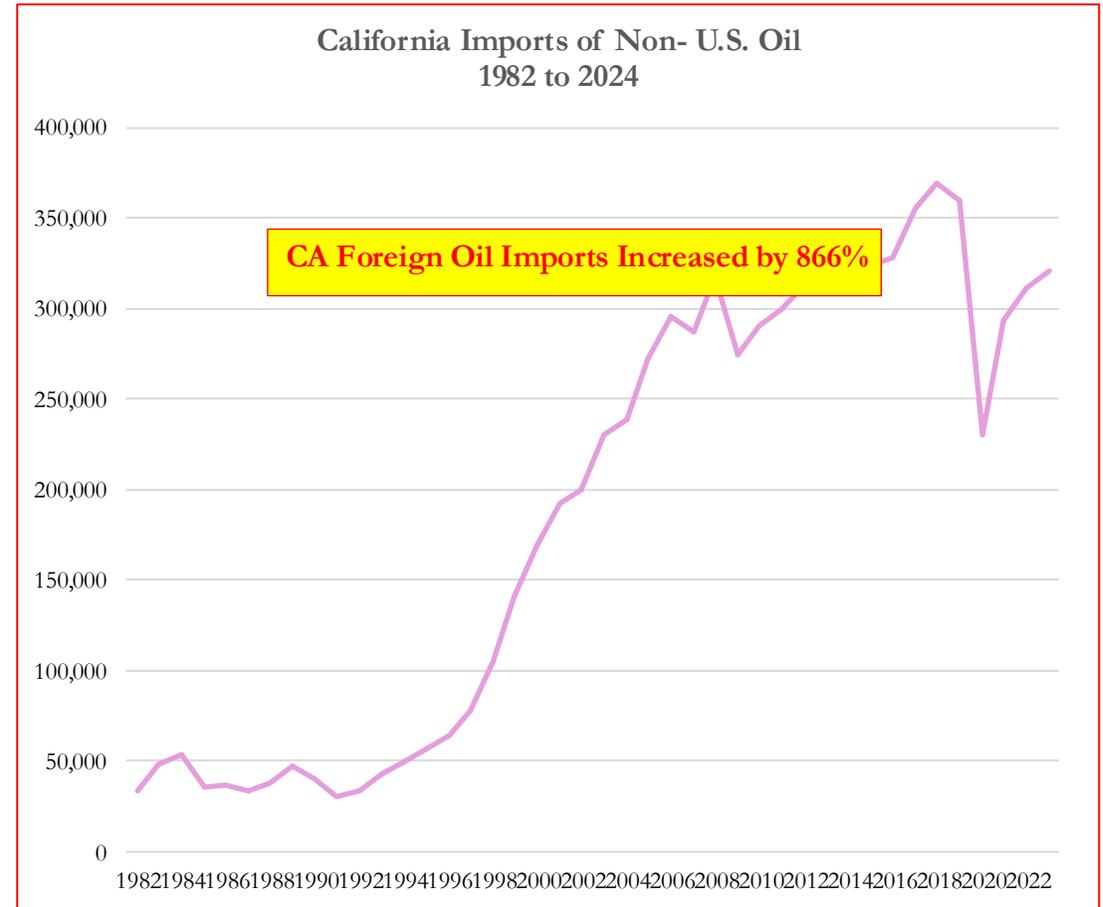
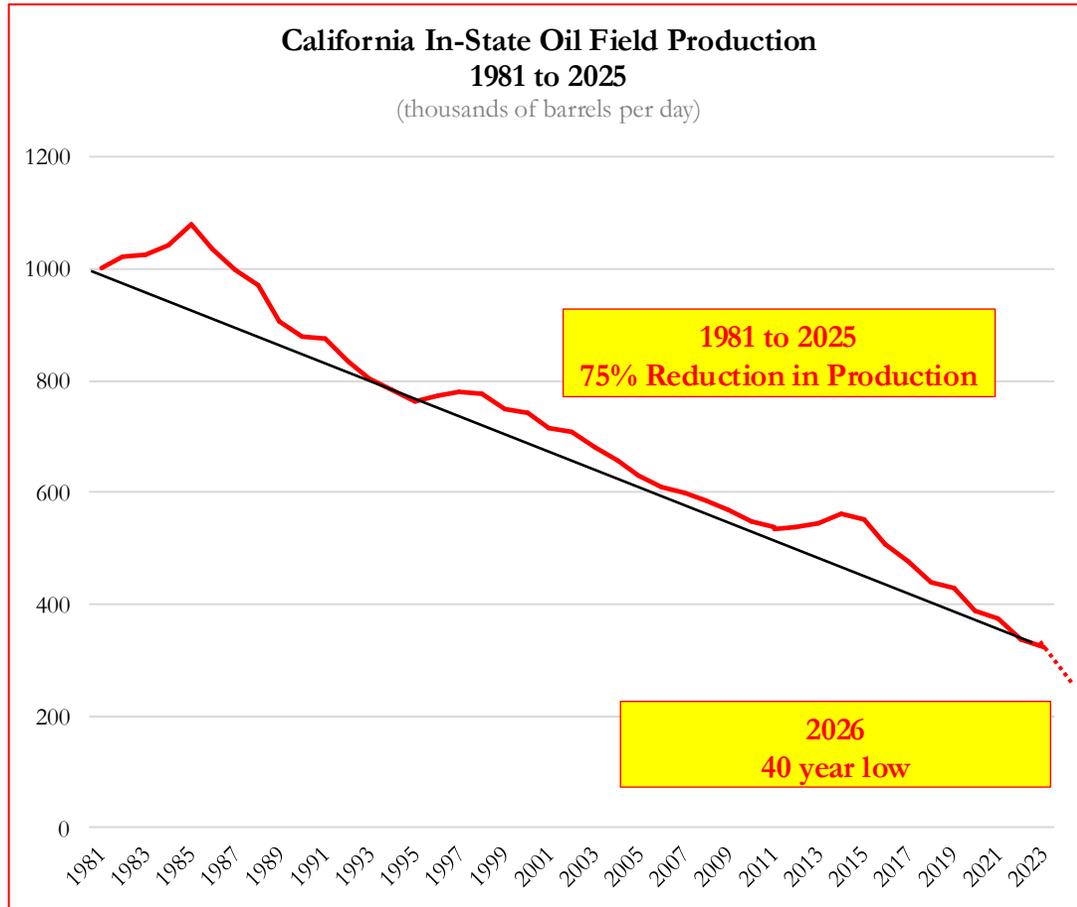


California Production & Supply

Supply: Crude oil is supplied by in-state production & imports

- California has 3% of U.S. oil reserves and ranks 5th in U.S. reserves.
- At one time, California was the world leader in oil production and exports.
- California is the most heavily dependent of all 50-states on non-U.S. foreign oil and gasoline suppliers.
 - In the 1980's, California was self-sufficient and imported only around 6% of its oil needs from non-U.S. foreign sources.
 - For 2025, California will need to import more than 67% of its oil needs from Iraq and other petrostates.
 - According to various estimates, **California ranks #1 in payments to foreign sources** of oil and pays more than \$61.8 million per day, or \$22.5 billion annually, to foreign petrostates such as Iraq.
- Since 1981, California in-state oil production has fallen by 75%, while its population and motor vehicle registrations grew.
- California began importing more oil than it produced in 2005.

California Production Fell & Imports Increased



California Production & Supply

- **For 2025, California in-state crude production has fallen to a 40-year low of approximately 102,211,907 (b/d) or 9% less than 2025.**
- **SB 237 alone will not compensate for the dramatic long-term decline in in-state crude production.**
- **AB 30 will not have the material influence on gasoline demand and a \$0.20 a gallon on retail prices as suggested by the Governor.**
- **California's gasoline consumption is NOT declining at the rates suggested by CARB or the CEC.**



Section 3.0
California Crude Oil Production & Imports

The California Conundrum...Consumption is relatively static

Demand: Amount of crude oil and fuels consumed

- California consumes around 1.89 million barrels of oil per day, over 13.5 billion gallons of gasoline annually, and between 32 to 37 million gallons of gasoline a day.
- California's demand for gasoline is relatively static.
 - For 2025-2045, CEC projects a 58-85% drop in gasoline consumption...implying a 3.6% annual decrease or over 3x historical rates.
 - For 2025-2045, CEC projects a 540-1,260% increase in ZEVs...implying a 63% increase in adoption rates annually.
- California consumption is **declining at rates far less** than those optimistically forecasted and widely publicized by the CEC and CARB

The California Conundrum: Consumption is relatively static

Demand: Amount of crude oil and fuels consumed

- **Based on CDFTA revenue data, California's gasoline consumption, as measured in millions of gallons sold for the 2001 to 2024 period, has declined 13%, or less than 1% per calendar year.**
 - After the end of Covid in 2022, the demand for gasoline in California has increased by nearly 7%, for the 2022 to 2025 period.
 - Jet fuel is the fastest growing segment of fuels in California.
- **California also supplies gasoline and jet fuel to Arizona (35-40%) and Nevada (88%).**
- **California refineries provide fuels to U.S. military installations in California, Nevada, Arizona, and to the U.S. forces deployed in the Asia-Pacific region and are essential to force readiness and national security.**

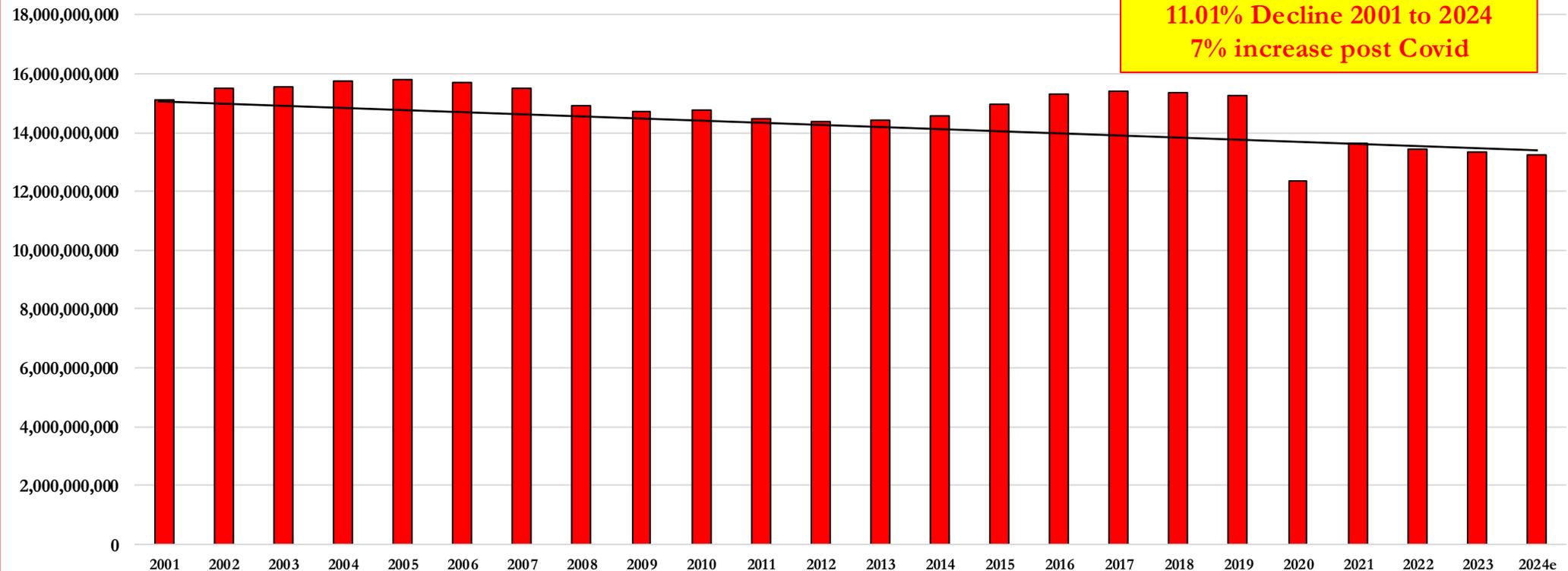
California Consumption

CDTFA Net Taxable Gasoline Sales by Calendar Year

(net of aviation fuel sales)

2001 to 2024(e)

(2000 & 2001 are gross)



California Consumption: Sociological Factors

Sociological Factors: Work from Home & Population

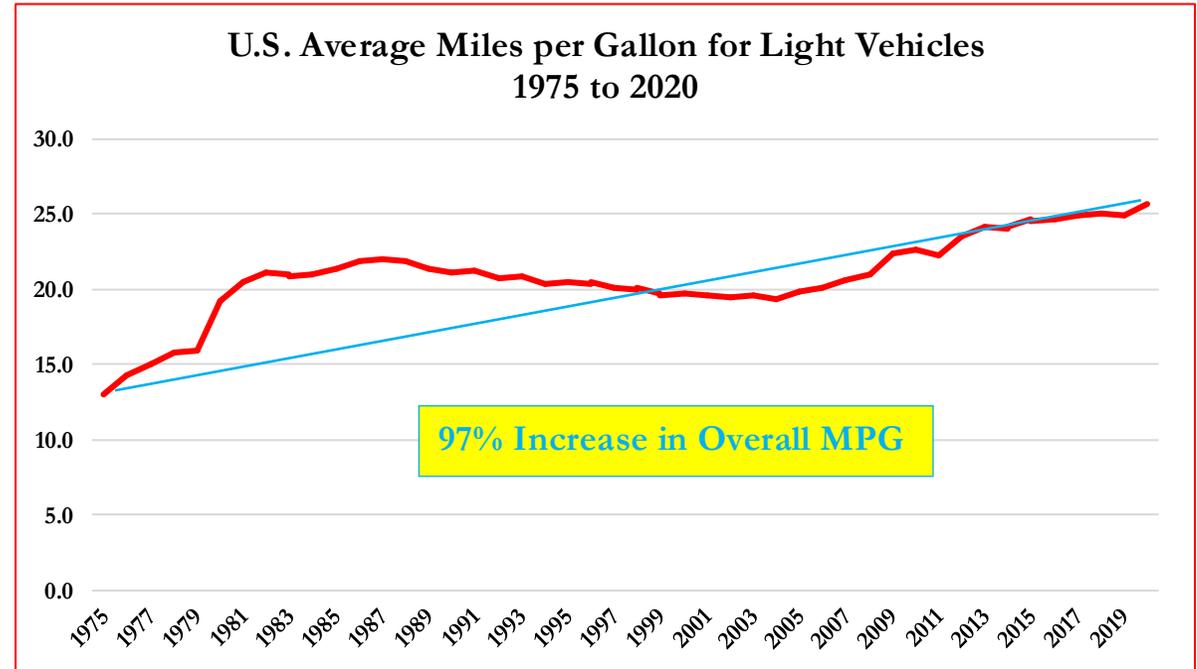
- **Work at home, telecommuting, and hybrid work modes (in-office and home) reduce the number of miles associated with commuting to work.**
- **In 2005, California, along with the rest of the U.S., averaged about 5% of its labor workforce working from home.**
 - California's work at home percentage of its labor force increased to 7% in 2019.
 - Commencing with the outbreak of COVID and the California "stay-at-home" mandates, the percentage of at-home work increased and peaked at 22% in 2021, as compared to the overall U.S. at 18%.
 - By 2022, the percentage of the California workforce that stayed at home had fallen to 17%, which was still higher than the overall U.S. rate 15%.
 - A 2024 MIT study indicates that, in general, a "1 percent decrease in onsite workers leads to a roughly 1 percent reduction in [automobile] vehicle miles driven, but a 2.3 percent reduction in mass transit ridership."
- **Since 2020, California's population has declined by 1.36%, resulting in a loss of one seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.**

California Consumption: Technological Factors

Technological Factors

Engine and Drivetrain Efficiency Has Improved

- Over the last 50 years, automotive engines and drivetrains have become more efficient, resulting in improved miles per gallon.
- In 2025, California ranked 1st in the U.S. for average mpg @ 33.5 compared to the national average of 27.5 mpg.



California Consumption: ZEVs... “It is very unlikely that we will hit our goals, and to be completely frank, the EV goals are a noble aspiration but unrealistic.” (Bruce Cain, Stanford)

EV Adoption is Slowing...Ford is Exiting Light Trucks; Dealer Inventories are Growing & Stellantis Took a \$26 Billion Write-down

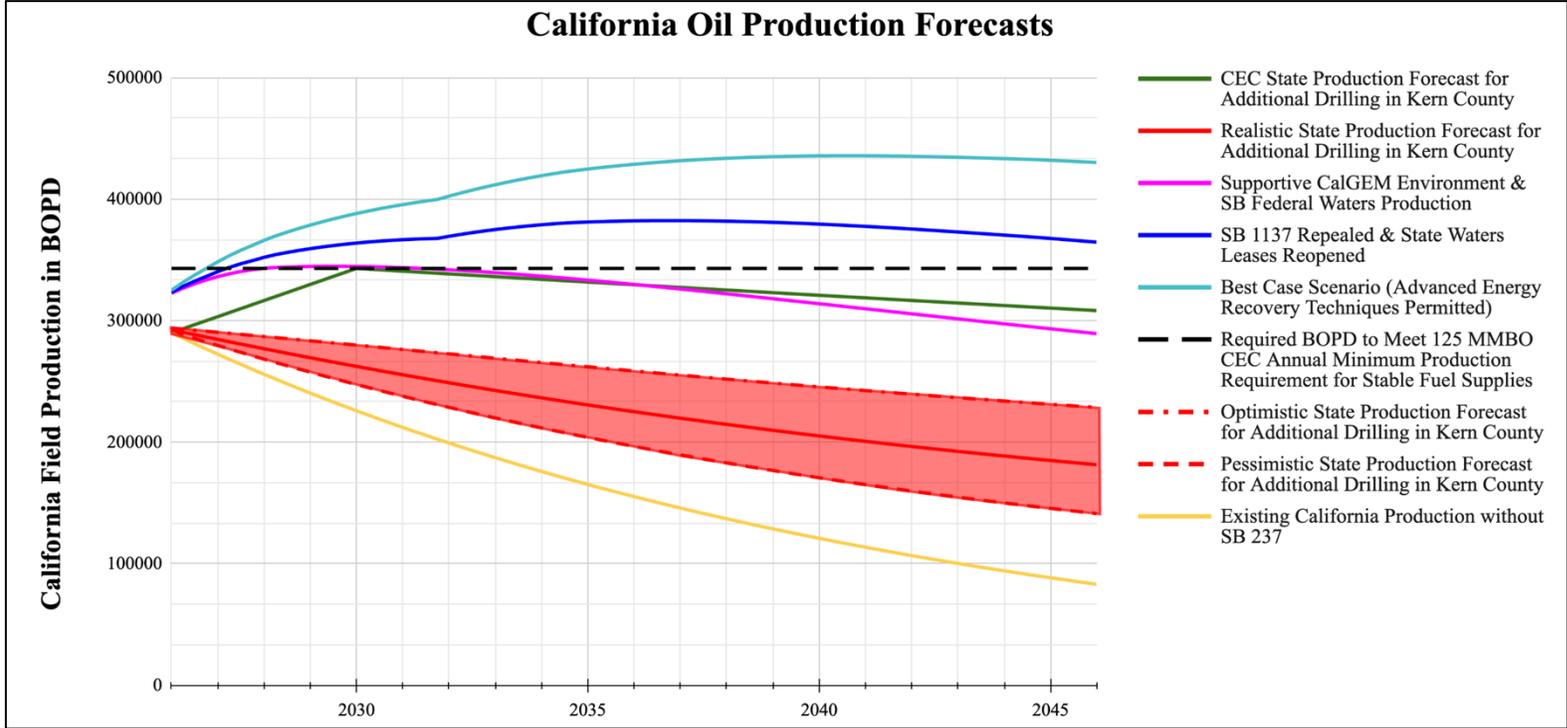
- Thirty-five percent (35%) of California’s electrical energy is derived from fossil fuels and over 96% of its estimated 40 million vehicles (of various types) use gasoline or diesel fuels.
- California residential and renter electricity rates are around 80% higher than the national average for 2024
- CEC is projecting a 58 to 85% drop in gasoline demand for the 2025 to 2045 period. Correspondingly, CEC is projecting a 540 to 1260% increase in EVs. *(How?)*
- EV prices range from the upper \$20,000s to over \$150,000 per vehicle.
- EV in 2015 the average transaction price was \$36,063, without incentives and subsidies.
- For 2024, the U.S. average transaction price for an EV increased by 55% to around \$57,000, without incentives over 2015 average prices.
- EV sales spiked in September 2025, in advance of subsidies and incentives being terminated, and as anticipated, national EV sales for October 2025 dropped by 58% and are expected to remain relatively lethargic.

CEC is Forecasting 1100-1200% as many registered as exist today for 2045



The Loss of Refiners & Lower In-state Oil Production Adversely Impacts CA's Intrastate Pipeline Infrastructure

- SB 237 will be **insufficient** in compensating for losses and averting the collapse of the Crimson pipeline.
- Demand for the northbound pipeline complex capacity (300,000 b/d) will be reduced by the closure of the Valero refinery and loss of 149,000 barrels of daily refining capacity.



Estimated In-State Oil Production Shortages

Year	2026	2030	2035	2040	2045
Production Shortage in bopd	52,100	70,800	92,700	111,700	127,500
Annual Production Shortage (bbls)	19,017,000	25,842,000	33,836,000	40,771,000	46,538,000



Section 4.0

California In-State Oil & Gasoline Production Supply Shortfalls

California Refineries: Disappearing Assets

The Long, Continuous Decline

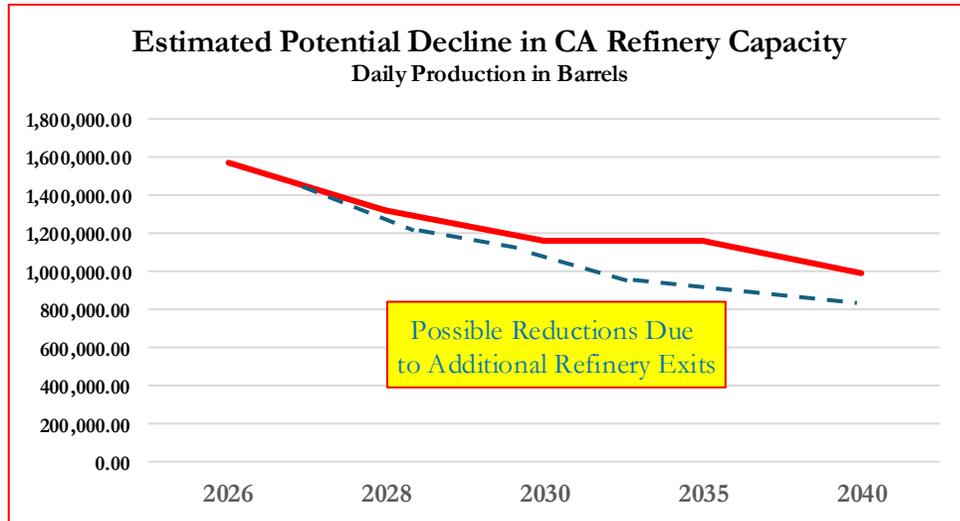
- California has (had) the third largest refinery capacity in the U.S.
- California has been experiencing long-term declining in-state refinery capacity and production.
- California produces between 25.0 and 34.5 million gallons of gasoline per day.
- In 2024, California had an aggregate refinery processing capacity of 1,622,171 barrels of crude oil per day, which is a 5% reduction from 2023 levels of 1,710,371.
- In 2026. California will have an aggregate refinery capacity of around 1,322,671 b/d/.
- From 1983 to April 2026 (est.), the processing capacity of CA in-state refineries producing CA compliant gasoline will have declined by 43.48%.

Shutdowns & Losses

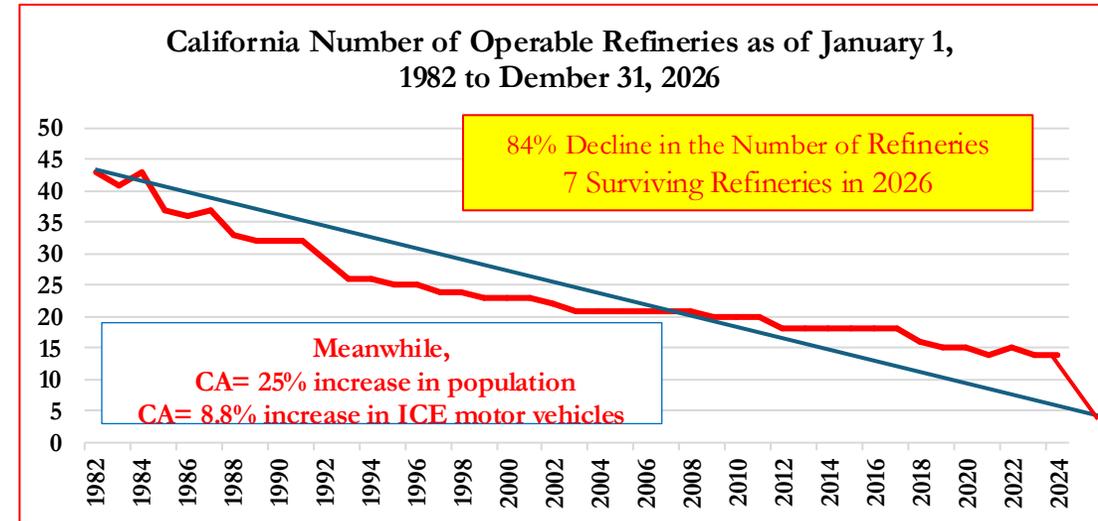
- From 2023 to April 2026, California will lose 20.95% of its in-state refinery capacity.
- Two refineries, are shutting down...284,000 of lost production:
 - Phillips 66 in SoCal (LA) is closed:
 - Loss of 139,000 b/d of in-state production
 - Valero in NorCal (Benecia) is closing (1/31- 4/26/26):
 - Loss of 145,000 b/d of in-state production
 - Collectively California is losing 18% of 2024 total refining capacity.
- City of Benecia is losing 20% of its tax base & revenues plus over 400 in jobs losses.
- Chevron and ExxonMobil have written down between \$4.5 to \$5.0 billion in refinery and other California-based asset impairments.
- Chevron will complete its planned departure from California by 2030/31.
- There is a strong possibility that more refineries may exit the Golden State in 2027 and 2030-2032 period.

California Refineries: Factors Contributing to Potential Shortfalls

Continuous Decline in Refinery Production



Continuous Refinery Exits While Population & ICE Vehicles Grew



- In-state gasoline production will be reduced by at least **6.2 million gallons a day**, with progressively worse-case estimates indicating **9.33 to 10.2 million gallons a day**.
- In addition, jet fuel production from Valero will drop by **600,000** gallons a day.
- By 2032, California refinery production could further decline by 27-35% or more, placing greater pressure on shrinking supplies and indicating possible increases in consumer prices past \$8.00 a gallon.

California Refineries: Less Refineries = Less Production = Greater Reliance on Foreign Suppliers = Higher Retail Prices

ESTIMATED CALIFORNIA REFINERY PRODUCTION 2023 -2026 (Adjusted for planned shutdowns)				
CA Refinery Capacity- CARB Fuels Only	2023	2024	2025	2026(e)
Marathon Petroleum Corp., Los Angeles Refinery	363,000	365,000	365,000	365,000
Chevron U.S.A. Inc., El Segundo Refinery	285,000	285,000	285,000	285,000
Chevron U.S.A. Inc., Richmond Refinery	245,271	245,271	245,271	245,271
PBF Energy, Torrance Refinery*	160,000	160,000	160,000	160,000
PBF Energy, Martinez Refinery*	156,400	156,400	156,400	156,400
Valero Energy, Benicia Refinery	145,000	145,000	145,000	0
Phillips 66, Los Angeles Refinery	139,000	139,000	100,000	0
Valero Energy, Wilmington Refinery	90,200	85,000	85,000	85,000
Kern Energy, Bakersfield Refinery	85,000	26,000	26,000	26,000
Gross Total-Refinery Capacity- B/D	1,668,871	1,606,671	1,567,671	1,322,671
Adjustment for Planned Maintenance & Turnaround				276,640
Estimated Net Refinery Production				1,046,031
Percentage Change		-3.73%	-2.43%	-15.63%
Cumulative Percent Change in Gross Refinery Production 2023-2026				-20.74%
Cumulative Percent Change in Net Refinery Production 2023-2026				-37.32%

- Cumulative 2020-2026 Production Decline = 24%.
- Further Declines are Anticipated Unless Significant Regulatory Course Corrections are Taken.
- NorCal Is More Vulnerable to Severe Supply & Price “Shocks” Than SoCal.
- The loss of the Valero complex contributes to the collapse of the San Pablo Bay (Crimson) Pipeline...the vital north/south link & could compromise U.S. force readiness.

Less California Refineries = Gasoline Shortages

Decline in Refinery Production

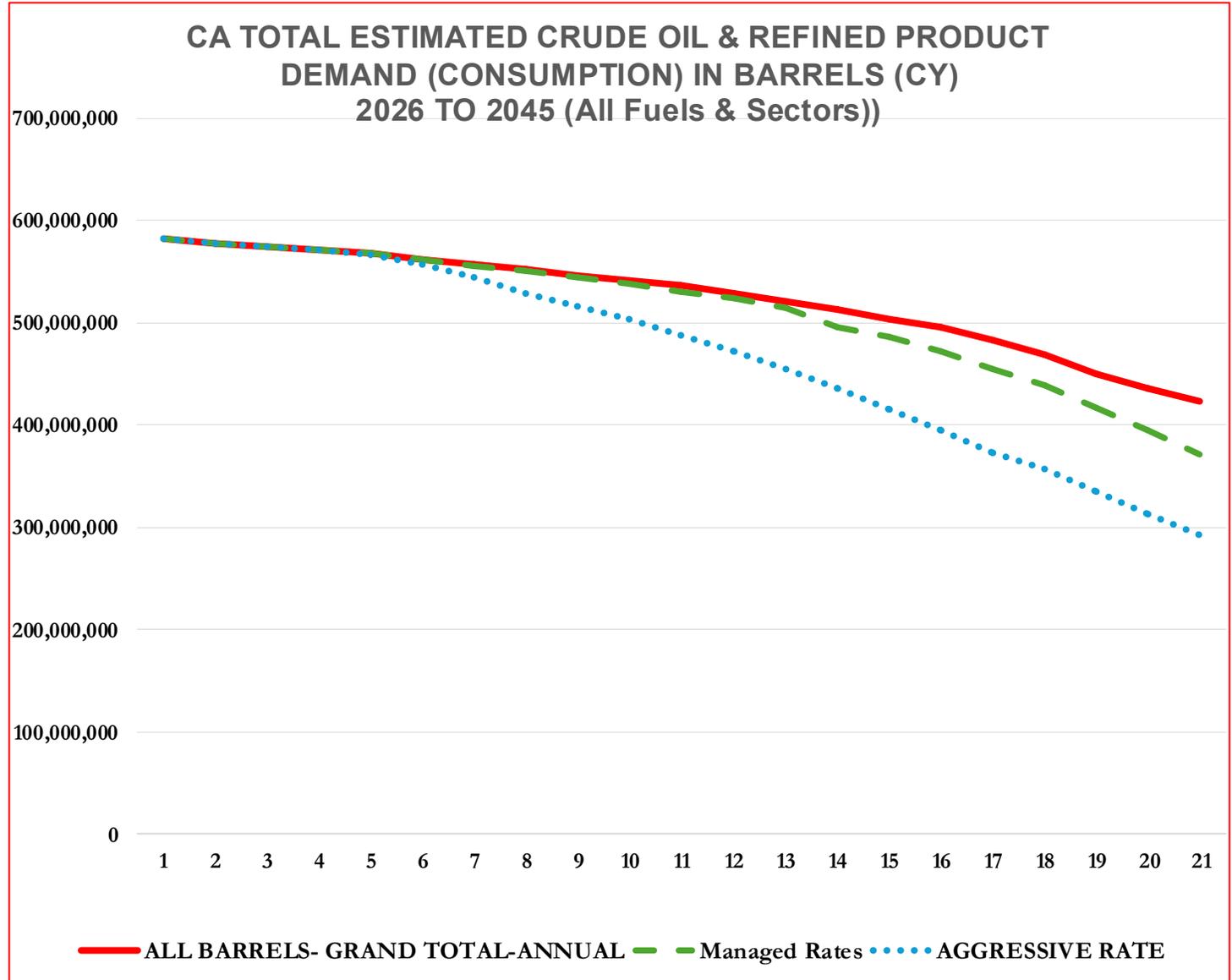
- The decline in refiners and refinery production will create a substantial shortfall between in-state production and demand.
- California will become more vulnerable to external events, geopolitical situations, and force majeure.
- If California does not take action now, it will be left with options other than increasing imports.

Shortfall: In-state Production to Demand

- Gasoline consumption will fall but most likely not at the aggressive rates established by CEC (85.2%) for 2025 to 2045.
- California will become more reliant on non-U.S. foreign sourced gasoline and increasingly complex supply chains.
- California may be forced to rely more offshore barge and tanker storage of gasoline.
- In all cases, California will experience increases in maritime traffic, port congestion and GHG emissions due to its reliance on foreign sources.

California Refineries: Less Production = Gasoline Price Increases

- Gasoline Consumption Will Not Decline Commensurate with the Loss in Production.
- SB 237 will not be sufficient to compensate for losses and to avert the collapse of the Crimson pipeline.
- AB 30 will not have any material influence over gasoline consumption or prices, refinery operations or the Crimson pipeline.
- The shortfall between in-state production & in-state demand will become more severe.
- Washington State Refiners Are Incapable of Compensating for the Loss of CA Refiners.
- **Price Increases are Inevitable...the only issue is...by how much?**



California Refineries: Foreign Product Sources

- To make-up for the loss of two in-state refineries, California will be forced to import a significant amount of gasoline blend stock from foreign sources.
- We can expect 3-5 times more maritime tankers, more port congestion, and increased port proximity GHG emissions.

Possible CA Sources for Gasoline Production by Nation by Typical Source of Crude Oil												
Possible Refinery/Supplier Source	Russia	Iran	Venezuela	Saudi Arabia	India	Iraq	Kuwait	USA	UAE	Qatar	Guyana	Norway Europe
India	Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
South Korea				Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Japan				Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Singapore				Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
China	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
United Kingdom								Yes			Yes	Yes
The Netherlands	Yes				Yes		Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes

Some possible sources of gasoline for California may have interest in conflict with the U.S. as well as marginal/questionable human rights & transparency policies...examples, Russia and the PRC.

- California gasoline purchased from India or China could have made from Russia crude. (Note: Pres. Trump has addressed this recently.)
- California's policies which force greater dependencies on foreign sources for gasoline and jet fuels compromise U.S. national security and force readiness.
- California's policies, decreasing crude production, and dwindling refinery capacity adversely impact Nevada & Arizona.



Section 5.0
Why Are Refiners Electing to Exit California?

California Refineries: "If California refiners are making so much money, why are they leaving?" Assemblymember Petrie-Norris

The decision to exit a complex & critical business such as a refinery, involves many complex operational, economic, strategic, capital & socio-political factors.

Economic & Operating Considerations

- Declining gasoline demand associated with ZEV and EV mandates.
- Extreme uncertainties as to long-term viability, political actions, and operating environment.
- Declining profit margins & increasing operating costs and high cost of regulatory compliance.
- Extreme capital intensity & commitment...*why invest billion in turnarounds?*
- On average, California refinery operating costs are **26% to 37% higher** than the U.S. average for refineries.
- California is one of the costliest states in the U.S. in which to operate a business.
 - Ranked 45th for cost of doing business,
 - Ranked 47th for business friendliness.
 - Ranked 50th for cost of living.
 - Ranked 48th for favorable tax climate.
 - Ranked 50th for state liabilities & unfunded liabilities.
 - Ranked 32nd for the economy.
 - California's total sum of all debts, including pension liabilities, is estimated to have reached \$1.6 trillion or 39% of its nominal GDP, representing around \$125,000 per capita.

California Refineries: “I've sat here for hours, and you haven't proved price gouging,” Senator Dahle

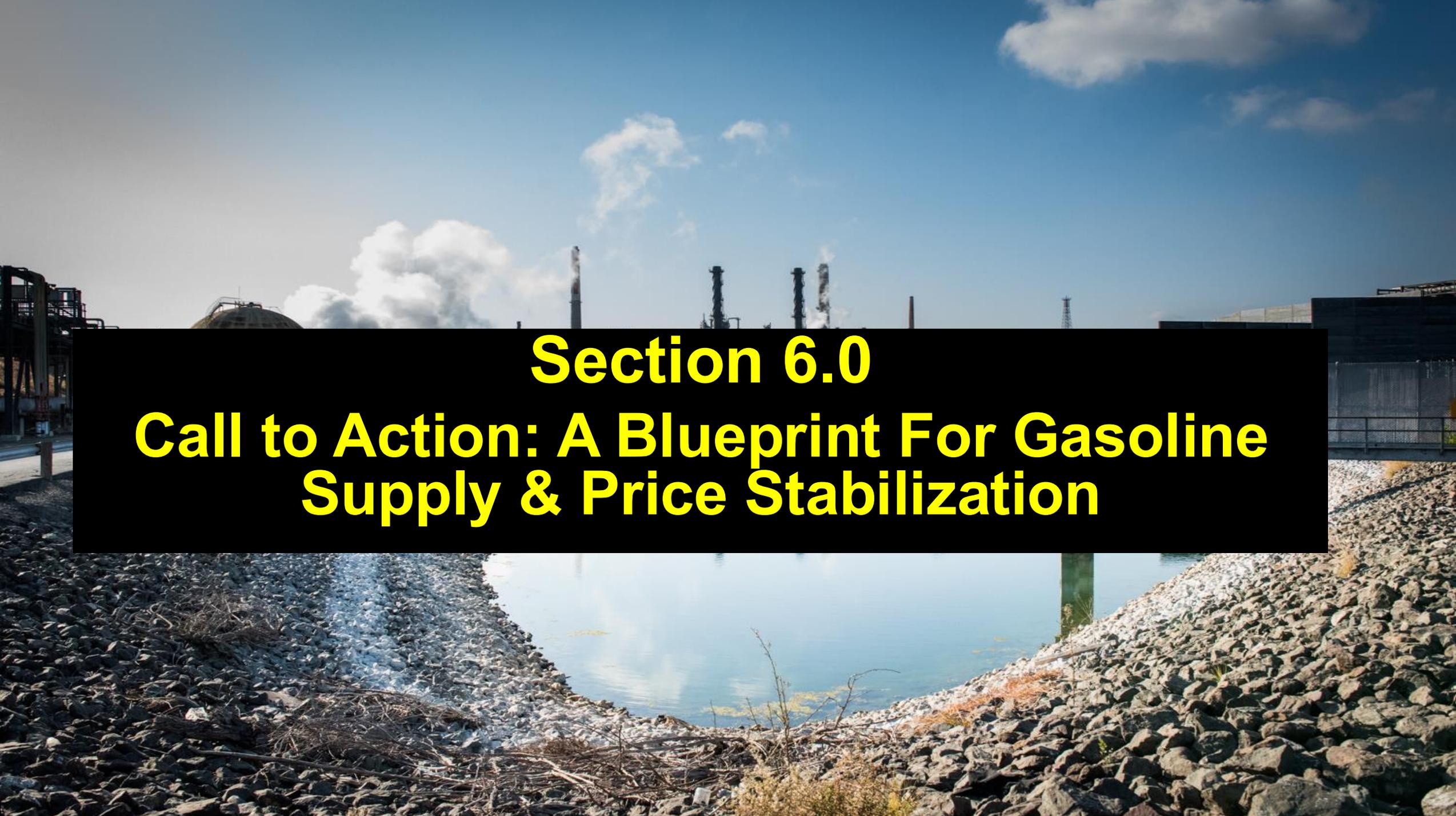
Political Rhetoric- Allegations, Vitriol Serve as Disincentives

“(CA) committed to phase out gasoline-powered cars and using our market power to push zero-emission vehicle innovation.” Gov. Newsom

- *They are lining their pockets by ripping off Californians...” Gov. Newsom*
- *“Our cars shouldn’t make wildfires worse.” Gov. Newsom*
- *“Cars shouldn’t melt glaciers or raise sea levels.” Gov. Newsom*
- *“The upfront cost of electric vehicles are projected to reach parity with conventional vehicles in just a matter of years.” Gov. Newsom*
- *“The data is clear: Oil refiners have been racking up profits by planning maintenance that reduces supply during our busy driving seasons.” DPMO Director Tai Milder*
- *“Big Oil has been lying and gouging Californians.” Gov. Newsom*

California Refineries: Why are they leaving?

- Refinery operators have a **fiduciary responsibility** to their shareholders.
- Operators have a fiduciary responsibility to **allocate & deploy capital & resources in the most efficient manner & in the best interests of their shareholders.**
- **Given the costs of doing business, high cost of regulatory compliance, & political uncertainties of operating in California, refiners will seek alternative locations in which to deploy their capital.**
- **Other companies have exited California**
 - Over 250 companies have exited California since 2019.
 - Oracle, Toyota, Honda, Tesla, and Charles Schwab have exited California.
 - Shell, Phillips & Valero have exited California.
 - Chevron is completing their exit by 2030.
 - Others will most likely follow.
 - Highest regulatory costs, fines and penalties in the nation.



Section 6.0

Call to Action: A Blueprint For Gasoline Supply & Price Stabilization

California: Call to Action

California has a unique, exclusive opportunity to demonstrate that environmental responsibility and energy security are mutually inclusive.

- Policies that reduce and restrict in-state production are counterproductive. Rather than reduce California's demand for crude oil, instead, they lead to the outsourcing of California's oil supply to oil producing regions with minimal labor and environmental regulations.
- This, in turn, ultimately increases emissions and pollution levels worldwide while also reinforcing California's support for human rights injustices and environmental destruction abroad by purchasing and using foreign sources of crude oil.
- Ultimately, a lack of action will also cause additional socioeconomic and environmental inequities in California wherein the least fortunate and most vulnerable individuals, families, and communities will disproportionately fall victim to higher prices, pollution, and a lack of affordable and reliable energy, further driving socioeconomic disparities and reinforcing cycles of poverty as they are the least able to absorb higher costs.

Without meaningful and practical policy changes that prioritize both energy security and real environmental progress, California risks sacrificing its own prosperity, climate goals, and environmental leadership, while failing to achieve the social equity and sustainability milestones its people deserve, undermining California's broader goals of environmental justice and economic opportunity for all its residents.

California Refineries: 5 Action Steps

At stake is California's vibrant economy and its ability to provide a viable and inviting business environment. For the next 30-years, petroleum will play an essential role in California's economy.

- Other than “importing more gasoline” (CEC) and increasing reliance on foreign suppliers, and foreign shippers and more maritime tankers, all of which increase global GHG emissions, California apparently has no real plan to address its pending gasoline crisis and associated price hikes.

To ensure gasoline security California should consider the immediate adoption of 5 Action Steps.

1- Increase In-State Oil Production.

- Allow for increased offshore oil production of the Santa Ynez Unit and use of gathering and transmission associated pipelines.
- Provides **350,000 - 400,000** barrels of crude with 96 hours.
- Promotes approximately 45,000 to 50,000 b/d in new & badly needed production.
- Would be directed to LA refineries.

California Refineries: 5 Action Steps

2- California would benefit from a comprehensive plan to manage both petroleum and refining assets, as well as its ambitions for more EVs.

- Is it realistic to assume that EVs will comprise over 90% of all vehicles?
- Is it realistic to assume that foreign powers will price California bound products fairly and competitively.
- Is it safe to assume that foreign suppliers will act in the best interests of Californians and those of the U.S.?
- Is it correct for CARB to neglect to include source to pump GHG emissions associated with foreign refiners and 40-day oceanic transit times, and port waiting times.

3- Revisit and amend or repeal SB 1137, AB 1167, AB 3233, SBX 1-2 and ABX2-1 to be more pragmatic with respect to crude oil and refining operations in California. These actions are contrary to capital investment in infrastructure and serve as disincentives for refiners and producers to remain in the state.

4- Seek Presidential intervention through the invocation and application of the National Defense Production Act.



Section 7.0
Additional Resources

Some Additional Resources & Studies

2026

- **“Ethanol: An Examination of AB 30 and its Impact on California Gasoline Prices.... Fact, Fiction, Fantasy or Reality?”** (Mische, Rector, Silvi) (January 12, 2026).

2025

- **“California’s Oil and Gasoline Conundrum: A Blueprint to Address California’s Gasoline Insecurity, High Prices and Avert More Pipeline & Refinery Closures.”** (Mische, Rector, Silvi) (December 1, 2025).
 - USC website: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1m3mMURBLANnvzdHUmAjZFU3qTQp6-Y9I/view>
- **“A Study of SB 237 to Stabilize Oil Production in California.”** (Silvi, Rector, Mische)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mILa7INf0II>
 - USC website: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yfj8Ub2mhE9lbwZ-DLUa4A6SHN8saNhl/view>
- **“California Energy & Fuel Policies: A Clear & Present Threat to National Security and Force Readiness.”** (Ellis,. Mische, Ariza) (October 21, 2025).
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EU8x9ERxzHY>
 - USC website: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kDC3Kwqoj3p3NL7fE1rLad-cG-8Y4fgK/view>

Some Additional Resources & Studies

2025

- **"We still rely on gasoline. Why is California adding to the cost and pollution?"** (Mische) (LA Times Editorial, July 2025).
 - LA Times website: <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2025-07-06/california-gasoline-costs-refineries-pollution-imports>
- **"Ensuring California's Gasoline Security for the 21st Century."** (Mische) (May 5, 2025).
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7N95tIY0zrl>
 - USC website
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CVsBHQ0s4FX57xQD2iy0ZD1V_MIKJMZX/view?pli=1
- **"A Study of California Gasoline Prices."** (Mische) (March 16, 2025).
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J48kNcDkT7g>
 - USC website: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YK_IxHVQokM6-fMXhTs9fmW2ZW0zdhuuj/view

Some Additional Resources & Studies

2025

- **“Fugitive Emissions from Natural Seeps and Orphaned Wells are Orders of Magnitude Greater than Fugitive Emissions from Production Equipment in Southern California.”**
(James Rector & Joseph Silvi, UC-Berkeley).

2024

- **“Brace for Impact. California Gasoline Prices to Increase in 2025.”** (Mische) (November 11, 2024).
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yc-VXwM7s9U>
 - USC website: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J9aNp1NPSzsNAEE9b4b6aUtYFoHiZtlm/view>
- **“Not All Oil is Created Equal: Understanding the Venezuelan Petrostate.”** (Mische) (September 9, 2024).
 - USC website: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wq-EX-19ztzgkRaqRfTNuCbSKmZpHnni/view>

A photograph of an industrial facility, likely a refinery or chemical plant, featuring large white storage tanks, a tall distillation column, and a complex network of pipes and valves. The scene is set against a clear blue sky. A black rectangular box with a red border is overlaid in the center, containing yellow text.

**QUESTIONS?
CONCERNS?
THOUGHTS?**

THANK YOU!

Please feel free to reach out to me at any time with questions or needs.

Professor Michael Mische

Email: mische@marshall.usc.edu