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Control California's Surging Gas Prices

I am writing as a California resident and voter concerned about the ongoing gasoline price spike and the California Energy Commission's failure to use the authority the Legislature already gave you.

California drivers are now paying \$1.66 more per gallon than the national average — far above the typical \$1.10 gap. This is not an accident. As Consumer Watchdog recently documented, two Northern California refineries are offline simultaneously while the CEC has taken no enforcement action. Enforce ABX2-1 now; write minimum inventory rules and stop premature refinery shutdowns.

Valero notified the CEC it would shutter Benicia by April 2026, but began shutting key units in February. The law requires 12 months' advance notice of permanent shutdown and gives the CEC power to demand they stay operational. You haven't used it. ABX2-1 explicitly authorizes the CEC to adopt regulations requiring refineries to maintain minimum fuel inventories and resupply plans during outages. The law was signed October 2024. It is now February 2026. The rules still don't exist. Refineries violating these requirements face penalties up to \$1,000,000 per day after a three-day notice period. No penalties have been issued.

I am not asking for new laws. I am asking you to enforce the ones already on the books: Immediately demand Valero keep the Benicia refinery fully operational through April as originally promised.

Expedite and finalize the minimum inventory and resupply regulations required by ABX2-1 — work that has been "slow walked" for over a year. Schedule public oversight hearings where the Commission explains why these tools haven't been used and what concrete steps you'll take going forward.

I support California's environmental goals. But when the state passes laws to stabilize the fuel market and then refuses to implement them, it's working families who pay the price at the pump. The CEC was given these powers for exactly this moment.

Thank you,
Antonio Najarro