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December 29, 2025

Senator Catherine Blakespear  
Senate Environmental Quality Committee  
1021 O Street, Room 3230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Senate Bill 58: Hydrogen Sulfide Standard**

Dear Senator Blakespear,

On behalf of the City of Imperial, I am pleased to offer our strong support of SB 58. SB 58 requires CARB to conduct a comprehensive review of the current Hydrogen Sulfide standard and adopt an updated standard if necessary.

The City of Imperial works to protect public health and safety, provide essential municipal services, promote responsible environmental practices, and support the quality of life and economic well-being of its residents.

Hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) is a colorless, highly toxic gas with a strong odor detectable at very low concentrations and is formed during bacterial decomposition of human and animal waste. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) first adopted the standard for Hydrogen Sulfide for the purpose of odor control in 1969. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) last reviewed the scientific literature in 1981, nearly 50 years ago, and concluded that the standard was adequate. Since then, the standard has not been changed.

Communities living near the Tijuana River Valley (TJRV) experience frequent and prolonged exposures to hydrogen sulfide at concentrations dozens of times higher than the current state standard, as well as chronic low-level exposures. Exposure to hydrogen sulfide has been associated with health symptoms reported in South Bay, San Diego, and Imperial Beach, including respiratory and gastrointestinal issues, headaches, fatigue, nausea, skin irritation, and respiratory irritation. Current evidence indicates that chronic exposure can contribute to persistent respiratory and neurological impacts, with heightened susceptibility among children, older adults, and individuals with preexisting health conditions.

Likewise, communities surrounding the Salton Sea experience frequent elevated and chronic low-level hydrogen sulfide concentrations, caused by anaerobic biological activity,

decomposition of organic matter, and shoreline emissions, with recorded levels frequently exceeding the state standard. These exposures disproportionately affect vulnerable and environmentally overburdened communities, including low-income households, immigrant communities, Latino and Tribal populations, and areas already experiencing elevated rates of respiratory and other health conditions, exacerbating existing health inequities.

Currently, no uniform standard on Hydrogen Sulfide exists across state and federal agencies. By conducting a review, we can fully understand the risk posed to human health and ensure we are taking appropriate steps to protect Californians.

For these reasons, SB 58 (Padilla) would further the City of Imperial's goal of protecting public health, improving air quality, and advancing environmental justice for communities disproportionately impacted by air pollution. The City of Imperial is committed to safeguarding the health and well-being of its residents through science-based standards and proactive environmental oversight, and we are proud to support SB 58 (Padilla) and encourage your support when it is heard in your committee.

Sincerely,



Ida Obeso-Martinez

Mayor

City of Imperial