



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 20 2026

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 605 without my signature.

This bill would establish the Refinery Safe Staffing Task Force, composed of employer and employee organization representatives, to report to the Legislature by June 1, 2029, on strategies for employee retention prior to refinery closures.

I support the author's intent to identify strategies to protect and support workers displaced by refinery closures, and the state needs a real, long-term plan. This bill, however, establishes a task force supported by staff from the Division of Occupational Safety and Health's Process Safety Management Unit, which primarily inspects refineries and chemical plants that handle large quantities of toxic and flammable materials. This Unit is also charged with enforcing health and safety standards intended to prevent catastrophic explosions, fires, and releases of dangerous chemicals.

I am concerned that diverting these specialized inspectors to support the task force envisioned by this bill — without any identified resources — will diminish their ability to focus on holding refineries accountable for meeting required health and safety standards, potentially putting refinery workers at greater risk.

For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom

