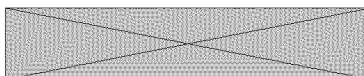


From: Cherry, Brian K
Sent: 9/26/2013 9:11:49 AM
To: Prosper, Terrie D. (terrie.prosper@cpuc.ca.gov)
Cc:
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Subject:



CPUC Should Ensure Safety

By Dr. Sean Wright
Contra Costa Times – Letters to the Editor
September 24, 2013

Dear Editor:

A large part of our mission as the Antioch Chamber of Commerce is to represent the interest of our business owners. And, one critically important matter that unites business owners regardless of industry, is consumer safety; from products to safe sidewalks. This is why the Antioch Chamber has overwhelmingly voted to publicly express its dismay about the recent recommendations by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) staff concerning **Pacific Gas & Electric's** involvement with the 2010 San Bruno pipeline explosion.

The Antioch Chamber continues to send its condolences to the families and victims of this horrific tragedy. We understand that no monetary value could ever replace the eight lives that were needlessly taken in the San Bruno explosion. In that same vein, we have been impressed that since the explosion, PG&E has made dramatic leadership changes, paid over \$70 million in restitution to victims and the city of San Bruno, and has since begun the process of rebuilding its infrastructure and making pipeline safety upgrades estimated at over \$2.2 billion.

Three years later, the CPUC is ready to impose a fine on PG&E. The Antioch Chamber does not disagree that a substantial fine should be imposed; however, a punishment so large and improperly structured as this one will have impacts on the entire Bay Area, including the far East Contra Costa County regional economy.

As it stands, CPUC staff have recommended that PG&E be fined at least \$300 million, the largest ever imposed, as part of a \$2.25 billion penalty. The \$300 million would be paid to the state government's general fund. This puts PG&E in the position of having to pick and choose inspections and safety upgrades rather than having the necessary capital to enhance overall pipeline safety.

All of us, from PG&E to the average consumer, owe it to the victims of this tragedy to ensure this does not happen again. Therefore, the Antioch Chamber of Commerce urges CPUC to zero in on ensuring a tragedy of this magnitude does not happen again by making sure all fines and penalties incurred are directed to safety upgrades and not left to the discretion of the state legislation.

Dr. Sean Wright

CEO, Antioch Chamber of Commerce