

6/25/26

To: Santa Barbara County APCD

From: Tom Becker

Subject: Public comment, variance hearing, 6/25/26, Case 2026-07-N

I hereby object to Santa Barbara County Counsel Office having any involvement in this case, or any issue involving Sable Offshore.

In May/June 2025, the Office of County Counsel submitted a Request for Advice letter to the FPPC. The letter asked for advice on Hartmann's disqualifying conflict of interest involving Sable Offshore. The letter contained false material facts that influenced the FPPC to "clear" Hartmann. In December, County Counsel admitted to the FPPC that the May/June 2025 letter contained false material facts and provided the truthful material facts. FPPC rescinded their "clearance" for Hartmann.

During the time County Counsel was submitting the false document to the FPPC, County Counsel, Planning and Development and Hartmann had easy access to documents in the county's possession that directly contradicted the false material facts contained in the FPPC letter. Those documents include a tentative tract map approved by the County Planning Commission in March, 2017, a recorded easement and statements made by P&D staff during the March 29th, 2017 Planning Commission hearing for the approval of the aforementioned tentative tract map.

The entire County Counsel Office was fully aware of the submission of the document containing the false material facts- the entire office. The entire office had easy access to the aforementioned documents that contradicted the false material facts contained in the FPPC letter-the entire office.

Access was easy to those contradicting documents. Those documents were widely known to the public, even famous, due to media coverage of court cases involving those documents. It's difficult to accept the premise that County Counsel, Hartmann and P&D were not aware of those documents when the false document was submitted to the FPPC.

County Counsel-the entire office- should recuse themselves from any involvement in any issue concerning Sable Offshore. The county should retain outside counsel to represent the county or provide county with legal advice.