The Western States Petroleum Association is strongly opposed to legislative or regulatory mandates designed to force a 50 percent reduction in the amount of gasoline and diesel California consumers and businesses use by 2030.

Legislative mandates to force reductions in gasoline use are not climate change policies. They are attacks on an important industry in California designed to create conflict and controversy.

California’s petroleum producers, refiners and marketers are the source of nearly half a million jobs in California and the products we produce drive industries that comprise the eight largest economy in the world.

A mandate to reduce petroleum consumption by 50 percent is an impossibly unrealistic goal.

SB 350, the bill being proposed by Sen. de Leon, contains no specific programs or policies that would achieve the 50 percent cut. Rather, it gives the unelected California Air Resources Board open-ended authority to adopt mandates by regulation to achieve unrealistic cuts in gasoline and diesel use.
History tells us two things; mandates designed to achieve a goal of this magnitude will require unacceptably coercive restrictions on our mobility choices and will be crushingly expensive.

Since the early 2000s, a series of measures have been introduced seeking to cut petroleum use by 15 to 20 percent. Each time, they have been rejected or ignored because it quickly became clear that legislative mandates designed to change behavior and force consumer choices are expensive – very expensive.

By proposing a goal of 50 percent reductions, Sen. de Leon has upped the ante dramatically. His legislation is a blank check for the Air Resources Board to impose those same costly mandates on all Californians without legislative review or oversight.

Achieving so radical a goal in so short a time will require the removal of 8 billion gallons of gasoline and diesel from our fuel supply – with no guarantees that something will be available to replace them.

This proposal is a major distraction from the much more important work that must be done to move California’s climate change agenda beyond the 2020 horizon established by AB 32.

California’s petroleum producers and refiners will be participants in shaping those policies so that we can continue the progress we have made toward achieving greenhouse gas reduction targets.

It is one thing to establish goals like those identified in the Governor’s inaugural address and to use those goals to measure the effectiveness of climate change policies. It is another thing entirely to empower an unaccountable regulatory agency the authority to impose regulations to achieve those goals.

We look forward to working with the Governor and the Legislature to develop serious climate change policies and programs that will move us toward a lower carbon future. We urge legislators to reject Sen. de Leon’s proposed policy as quickly as possible so that we can get back to work on the real tasks at hand.

Category: A Message from WSPA
WSPA and its member companies remain committed to working with Governor Jerry Brown and legislators on climate change and energy policy. Today's announcement was an acknowledgement that California's energy future, economic competitiveness, and environment are inextricably linked.

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