# California Oil Well Ban Law Takes Effect as Referendum Withdrawn



**California Oil Well Ban Law to Take Effect Following Referendum Withdrawal**

In Sacramento, a California law enacted in 2022, which prohibits the drilling of new oil wells near homes, schools, and other sensitive areas, will take effect after the California Independent Petroleum Association (CIPA) withdrew a referendum seeking to overturn it.

The law has faced delays due to the referendum, for which CIPA had collected sufficient signatures. However, hours before the deadline to place the referendum on the ballot, the association opted to file a lawsuit to challenge the law instead of pursuing a vote.

This withdrawal has streamlined the upcoming November ballot. This move to litigation is part of CIPA’s strategy to contest the law’s portrayal as an “energy shutdown" and to argue that the law increases dependence on foreign oil and raises fuel costs.

Proponents, such as the California Environmental Justice Alliance and political figures like Gov. Gavin Newsom, argue that the law addresses pollution from oil wells, which contributes to health issues such as asthma and cancer.

Isaac Bryan, a state Assemblymember, noted legislative efforts to pressure the oil industry, including a proposed fine for operating non-compliant wells, which is now limited to his district's Inglewood Oil Field.

**Nevada Abortion Rights Amendment to Appear on Ballot**

In Reno, a proposed amendment to enshrine abortion rights in Nevada’s state constitution has qualified for the upcoming November ballot, as confirmed by the Nevada Secretary of State’s office. This follows the submission and verification of over 200,000 signatures by Nevadans for Reproductive Freedom (NRF), a political action committee advocating for the measure.

Nevada voters originally legalized abortion up to 24 weeks in 1990, but advocates seek constitutional protection to safeguard these rights against potential legislative changes. To amend the constitution, voters must approve the measure in both 2024 and 2026.

Lindsey Harmon, NRF’s president, emphasized the need for robust protections in light of the Dobbs v. Jackson decision, which overturned federal abortion rights. Anti-abortion group Nevada Right to Life criticized the proposed amendment, calling it misleading and dangerous.

Additionally, a separate measure requiring voter identification at polls is also poised to appear on the ballot, pending verification of approximately 180,000 signatures collected by the political action committee Repair the Vote.