

Assembly Bill No. 1496

CHAPTER 604

An act to add Section 39731 to the Health and Safety Code, relating to greenhouse gases.

[Approved by Governor October 8, 2015. Filed with
Secretary of State October 8, 2015.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1496, Thurmond. Methane emissions.

The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 establishes the State Air Resources Board as the state agency responsible for monitoring and regulating sources emitting greenhouse gases. Existing law requires the state board to complete a comprehensive strategy to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants, as defined, in the state.

This bill would require the state board to take specified actions and conduct specified analyses with respect to methane emissions.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Methane is a gas that is emitted from both natural and human sources. Its concentration in the global atmosphere has more than doubled since the beginning of the industrial revolution. Methane is a short-lived climate pollutant with a lifetime of only about 12 years when released into the atmosphere. It is an extremely potent greenhouse gas, with 20 to 30 times the warming power of carbon dioxide over a 100-year period and more than 80 times over a 20-year period.

(b) The life-cycle greenhouse gas emission from the drilling, production, and transportation of natural gas can result in methane leaks, and there is a need for much better information on the life-cycle methane emissions resulting from California's imports of natural gas.

(c) Recent satellite studies have shown methane hot spots in the San Joaquin Valley and higher levels of emissions than were previously estimated from the principal sources of methane in California. There is an urgent need to improve the monitoring and measurement of methane emissions from the major sources in California.

SEC. 2. Section 39731 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read: 39731. The state board shall do all of the following:

(a) Undertake, in consultation with districts that monitor methane, monitoring and measurements of high-emission methane hot spots in the

state using the best available and cost-effective scientific and technical methods.

(b) Consult with federal and state agencies, independent scientific experts, and any other appropriate entities to gather or acquire the necessary information for the purpose of carrying out a life-cycle greenhouse gas emission analysis of natural gas produced and imported into the state using the best available and cost-effective scientific and technical methods.

(c) Update relevant policies and programs to incorporate the information gathered and acquired pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (b).

(d) Review, in consultation with independent scientific experts, the most recent available scientific data and reports on the atmospheric reactivity of methane as a precursor to the formation of photochemical oxidants.