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## Keely Shaye Brosnan: BHP's LNG not the answer

By Keely Shaye Brosnan

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Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s commentary, "LNG a vital 'bridge' fuel," makes several good points, including that extracting and burning coal and oil is toxic, and causes harm to people and the environment. Although it is carefully worded to avoid an endorsement of the proposed BHP Billiton Cabrillo Port floating liquefied natural gas terminal, it leaves the reader with the misguided impression that this particular project could be the solution to many of these problems.

Unfortunately, Mr. Kennedy fails to point out that the proposed LNG project would violate environmental laws, including those intended to protect our air and water quality, marine mammals and public health and safety.

It omits the fact that BHP's proposed LNG project would contribute roughly 25 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere each year, adding to global climate change at a much faster rate than domestic gas production. For a respected lawyer who built his reputation on the strictest enforcement of environmental laws, Mr. Kennedy seems indifferent to BHP's ongoing efforts to secure an exemption from the Clean Air Act, an exemption that the county of Ventura has told the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency the project is not entitled to.

On Jan. 16, Rep. Henry Waxman, chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, launched an inquiry into the "EPA's flip-flop" on the requirement that BHP Billiton comply with regulations governing all new sources of air pollution. Mr. Kennedy could have used this opportunity to object to BHP Billiton's attempt to violate this crucial law, a law he has relied on to protect other communities across the United States.

Perhaps Mr. Kennedy is unaware of the trail of environmental degradation that BHP Billiton has left around the world. International newspaper reports have well-documented the devastation.

I only wish that Mr. Kennedy would have contacted the California Coastal Protection Network and the Environmental Defense Center and asked them to discuss the extensive legal comments and experts' reports they have compiled over the last three years.

He could have reached out to the communities of Oxnard and Malibu and asked them why they opposed the BHP Billiton LNG terminal project. He could have supported legislation that would have required a neutral evaluation of all pending LNG terminals in California to ensure that if California imported LNG, it would get the safest, state-of-the-art facility with the fewest impacts.

Mr. Kennedy could also have researched the other LNG terminal proposals for California that do not involve the construction of a massive floating LNG terminal that will pollute our air, threaten our health and safety, and pose long-term risks to our communities.

Or, he simply could have attended any of the numerous hearings where the residents of Oxnard and Malibu passionately testified in opposition to the project so that he could better understand why so many of us are concerned.

There are many things Mr. Kennedy could have done, but he didn't. And that's a shame.

— Keely Shaye Brosnan lives in Malibu with her husband, actor Pierce Brosnan.

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