



**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

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Application of Southern California Gas
Company (U 904 G) for Approval of the
Branch Offices Closure Proposal.

Application No. 25-05-001
(Filed May 2, 2025)

**UTILITY WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO, LOCAL 132 AND THE
INTERNATIONAL CHEMICAL WORKERS UNION COUNCIL, LOCALS 335, 478
AND 995C'S NOTICE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATION**

Dated: January 12, 2026

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OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

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Pursuant to the California Public Utility Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, Rule 8.4, the Utility Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO, Local 132 ("Local 132"), and International Chemical Workers Union Locals 350c, 478c, and 995c (collectively, "Unions") hereby notify parties to Application 25-05-001 of the follow oral ex parte communication. On January 7, 2026, representatives for the Unions had a virtual meeting with Caleb Jones, Advisor to Commissioner Darcie Houck, held over WebEx. The meeting began at 11 a.m. and lasted approximately 30 minutes. This meeting was initiated by the Unions. In attendance for the Unions were:

- William Gilbertson, President of Local 132;
- Mike Cormode, Secretary/Treasurer of Local 132;
- Gerry Acosta, Advisor to Local 132;
- Julia Harumi Mass, Counsel for the Unions; and
- Laura Carver, Counsel for the Unions.

Brief Summary of Oral Communication:

Ms. Mass began by introducing the participants and describing the two topics the Unions wished to cover: (1) the lack of evidence that closure of Southern California Gas

Company (“SoCalGas” or “Company”) branch offices would save customers money; and (2) the importance of branch offices to customers.

Regarding the first point, Ms. Mass stated that the Company’s Application in this matter represented that branch office closure would result in cost savings to SoCalGas ratepayers, which would be returned to them through the Core Fixed Cost Account. To understand the Company’s analysis of cost savings to consumers, the Unions submitted a data request for information that would presumably inform this analysis (e.g., information regarding rental costs for branch offices.) Ms. Carver stated that during subsequent meetings with counsel for SoCalGas about the pending data request, counsel for SoCalGas informed her that the Company had not conducted a rate impact analysis, and that there might not be any direct savings to consumers from closing the branch offices. Ms. Mass then showed the participants, via screen share, part of the Company’s response to the Unions’ data request in which the Company conceded that no rate impact analysis had been performed. A true and correct copy of the portion of the Company’s response to the Unions’ data request, a portion of which was displayed via screen share during the meeting is attached hereto as “Exhibit A.”

Regarding the second point, Mr. Gilbertson stated that it is particularly important to maintain the availability of immediate, in-person services for gas customers, given the dangerous and explosive nature of the utility. Mr. Gilbertson cited a recent gas leak in Castaic as an example, during which time approximately 1,400-1,500 calls were placed to the call center, which the call center was not equipped to handle. Mr. Gilbertson also highlighted the ongoing popularity of numerous branch offices, particularly among elderly, Spanish-speaking, and low-income customers. Mr. Gilbertson noted that many of the branch offices service agricultural workers, who are more likely to be paid in cash and/or lack bank accounts. Mr. Gilbertson stated that the branch office transaction data provided by the Company does not capture numerous non-financial transactions, such as service turn-on or

turn-off, that occur at the branch offices. These services cannot be performed by representatives at APLs. Mr. Gilbertson showed a video, via screen share, that he took at the Porterville branch office on January 5, 2026, in which the line of customers stretches out the door. A URL link to a true and correct copy of this video will be made available to the service list through a Notice of Availability, filed contemporaneously with this Notice.

Mr. Cormode confirmed that branch offices are also popular in the region in which he works, and noted that by the Company's own estimate, there are at least 132,000 customers who exclusively use the branch offices to make payments to SoCalGas. Mr. Cormode stated that Authorized Payment Locations ("APLs") are an inadequate substitute for service at a branch office: (1) payments made at APLs do not post immediately to the customer's account, unlike payments made at branch offices, and (2) there are certain customer questions that can only be answered by a knowledgeable customer service representative, which APL employees are not—APL employees cannot even look up a customer's bill or account in their system. Mr. Cormode also stated that the Company has actively sought to decrease utilization of the branch offices by limiting the services that branch office employees can perform. Mr. Cormode said the Company previously staffed branch offices with employees who could perform the full spectrum of possible transactions on behalf of customers, but now, many employees are not trained to perform tasks other than bill payment on behalf of customers. Mr. Cormode shared an anecdote from a relation of his who is a PG&E customer and who complained that the lack of in-person service options from PG&E prevented her from correcting account information because she had been unable to do so through on-line or phone contact.

Mr. Acosta stated that the Company is intentionally de-skilling the branch office employees so that they can only take bill payments. He also stated that gas is a different kind

of utility than water or electricity; it is volatile, and customers in a dangerous or hazardous situation should be able to get in-person assistance immediately.

Mr. Gilbertson concluded by reiterating that the branch offices remain viable and highly utilized by SoCalGas customers, despite the Company's attempt to make them obsolete. He stated that closing the offices will hurt the public, especially those who don't have access to technology and do not want to go to an APL for various reasons, and those who encounter safety hazards related to their gas. Lastly, he stated that because the Company does not anticipate any savings to ratepayers resulting from branch office closure, there is nothing to be gained from closing them.

Executed: January 12, 2026, at Los Angeles, California.

Dated: January 12, 2026

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 All Parties on Service List A.25-05-001

EXHIBIT “A”

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY

**UTILITY WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA (UWUA)
DATA REQUEST NO. UWUA-SCG-01 (Second Supplemental)**

**RECEIVED: SEPTEMBER 19, 2025
SUBMITTED: DECEMBER 15, 2025**

9. SoCalGas objects generally to each request to the extent that the request would impose an undue burden on SoCalGas by requiring it to perform studies, analyses or calculations or to create documents that do not currently exist.

10. SoCalGas objects generally to each request that calls for information that contains trade secrets, is privileged or otherwise entitled to confidential protection by reference to statutory protection. SoCalGas objects to providing such information to the extent it is not covered by the parties' Non-Disclosure Agreement.

11. SoCalGas objects to the data request's prefatory instructions, including but not limited to, the identification of each person providing a response to each data request and requesting information from January 1, 2013 to the present. SoCalGas will limit its responses to January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2024, to the extent applicable and unless otherwise specified.

SUPPLEMENTAL RESPONSES

QUESTION 2:

Other than BRANCH OFFICES, how many properties does the COMPANY rent and at what monthly cost?

SoCalGas Response:

SoCalGas objects to this request as seeking information that is irrelevant and not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.

SoCalGas Supplemental Response:

SoCalGas objects to this request as seeking information that is irrelevant and not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence because SoCalGas has not performed a rate impact analysis.

Subject to and notwithstanding the objections, SoCalGas responds as follows: Aside from branch offices, SoCalGas's lease portfolio includes over 50 telecom site leases, 1 headquarters lease and two over-flow parking agreements, all which total approximately \$20M in 2025.