



February 12, 2024

City of Santa Barbara Harbor Commission
132-A Harbor Way
Santa Barbara, CA 93109

Re: Improvements to the City of Santa Barbara Cruise Ship Program:

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the undersigned local conservation organizations and elected officials, we encourage you to finalize a set of recommendations that significantly improve the City of Santa Barbara's Cruise Ship program.

Over the past year, the Harbor Commission's Cruise Ship Subcommittee held five public meetings to learn more about the City's Cruise Ship Program and gather public comment about the future direction of the program. Members of the community have engaged in these meetings. The majority of public comments have called for significant improvements to the program.

Collectively, we represent thousands of Santa Barbara County residents who are concerned about risks to our environment and public health from increasing cruise ship visits, the industry's contributions to greenhouse gas emissions, and how the cruise ship program aligns with the city's commitment to carbon neutrality and reputation as a civic conservation leader.

We respectfully urge you to include the following in your recommendations:

- Reduce and cap the annual number of cruise ships visiting Santa Barbara to no more than 18 per year, which is the average annual number of cruise ships visiting Santa Barbara between 2010 and 2019. *This average does not include the 2-year covid shutdown.
- Ensure that all visiting ships are equipped with Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems by the year 2025.

- Request all visiting ships to lower their speeds to 10 knots or less when navigating the Santa Barbara Channel Vessel Speed Reduction Zone.
- Prioritize ships that use the best and most environmentally conscious technologies, including: closed-looped scrubber technology, and shore-power connectivity.
- Phase in the requirement of at-anchor emissions control systems when these technologies become feasible.
- Prioritize ships that have strong environmental and public health records, and restrict ships with poor records of environmental compliance.
- Maintain the Cruise Ship Subcommittee and allow for public input in decision making, adapting the City's cruise ship policies based on evolving industry sustainability best practices.

Implementing these recommendations will align the Cruise Ship Program more closely with Santa Barbara's sustainability goals, while maintaining the tourism revenue supported by the cruise ship industry. The program was initially established with limited forethought and oversight, and it is essential for it to more accurately represent our city's values. We believe it is crucial to establish these guidelines to safeguard the irreplaceable environment of our beloved section of the California Coast.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations,

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