



CALinnovates

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What do trains, limousines, electric rates, gas pipelines, water delivery and Internet service have in common? Crazy as it sounds, the California Public Utilities Commission regulates all of them. And, many believe, not doing a very good job of it.

Discontent with the PUC and its commissioners has been brewing since a gas pipe ruptured in San Bruno in 2010, tearing up a neighborhood and killing eight people. The explosion exposed safety failures by Pacific Gas & Electric — and an unhealthy coziness between commissioners and the utilities they regulate. Legislators have been trying to upgrade the commission ever since, to no avail. Last year, Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed six bills that would have required the PUC to be more transparent in its dealings.

[Your editorial asks](#), “What do trains, limousines, electric rates, gas pipelines, water delivery and Internet service have in common? Crazy as it sounds, the California Public Utilities Commission regulates all of them.” While the *LA Times* (and the PUC) may believe state regulators have authority over Internet services, the truth is the agency has never had any authority over the Internet. And with the PUC’s history of blunders and mismanagement with San Onofre, San Bruno and Porter Ranch serving as recent examples, this is a good thing for consumers.

Assemblyman Mike Gatto’s constitutional amendment moonshot to fundamentally change the California Public Utilities Commission may not ultimately fly with voters, but it certainly begins an important debate about the PUC’s ability to safeguard Californians now and into the future.

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