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Senate Passes Resolution to Reinstate Methane Pollution Safeguards

Washington, DC -- Today, the Senate passed (52-42) a resolution that would reinstate the Environmental Protection Agency's 2016 methane pollution safeguards for the oil and gas industry. The move is another critical step forward in undoing the previous administration's reckless assaults on vital climate and public health protections. Last night, the White House [released a statement](#) indicating their support of the resolution.

Methane, the primary component of fracked gas, is a powerful climate pollutant that is 87 times more powerful than carbon dioxide at warming the planet in the near-term. Methane emissions [reached record highs](#) over the last year even as the pandemic shut down significant parts of the economy, and [a growing body of evidence](#) indicates that oil and gas methane emissions are far higher than official estimates have thus far suggested. Next month, the Climate and Clean Air Coalition and the United Nations Environment Programme are expected to [publish a global methane assessment](#) which finds that the reduction of methane emissions must play a greater role in "warding off the worst effects of climate change."

Now that the Senate has passed this resolution, all eyes turn to the House of Representatives, which is anticipated to vote on the measure within the next couple of weeks.

"We are thrilled the Senate has passed this resolution and taken such a critical step in the right direction to reducing methane pollution from oil and gas development. We look forward to the House following suit in the coming weeks and President Biden signing this measure into law. More action is needed, however. We call on EPA to build upon the 2016 methane safeguards and cut methane pollution from both new and existing oil and gas operations by 65 percent below 2012 levels in the next five years. Emission reductions of this magnitude are needed to put frontline communities and public health first, and to tackle the climate crisis head on," **said Sierra Club Deputy Legislative Director Mahyar Sorour.**

"We are so grateful to Senator Heinrich for leading this effort to protect states like New Mexico from the worsening impacts of global climate change that are being driven by oil and gas methane waste and pollution. We've lost four years of time to make progress on curbing global climate change and protecting communities, so we hope to see the Biden Administration bring ambitious rules on methane and meet the moment," **said Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter Director Camilla Feibelman.**

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