

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 25th, 2021

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House Passes Resolution to Reinstate Methane Pollution Safeguards

Washington, DC -- Today, the US House of Representatives passed (229 to 191) a resolution that would reinstate the Environmental Protection Agency's 2016 methane pollution safeguards for the oil and gas industry. The Senate passed a similar resolution in April.

Methane, the primary component of fracked gas, is a 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, and [a growing body of evidence](#) indicates that methane emissions from oil and gas are far higher than official estimates have thus far suggested. A new [report](#) released by the UN Environment Programme last month highlighted the value of reducing methane emissions in tackling the climate crisis.

Reinstating these safeguards would also limit pollution of other dangerous gases and chemicals released alongside methane, which put communities at risk of long-term negative health effects.

In response,

Kayley Shoup, Citizens Caring for the Future

“As frontline community members in the Permian we experience everything that methane pollution has to offer. We are living through drought, record breaking temperatures, and are exposed to emissions that hurt our health every single day. We are grateful that Congress is moving to protect frontline communities such as our’s. In doing so they protect not only us, but also our planet from further climate catastrophe. We hope they choose to take even bolder action in the future in order to meet the magnitude of the moment we are living through.”

Gwen Lachelt, Western Leaders Network

“WLN urges U.S Representatives from the Interior West states to support HJR 34 which will allow the EPA to enact common sense regulations to reduce methane pollution. Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas that contributes to the climate change impacts we’re seeing across the West this summer with extreme heat and wildfires. The House’s passage of this resolution would eliminate loopholes for the oil and gas industry, restore EPA pollution protections, and allow the agency to pursue stronger standards to regulate methane emissions.”

Oriana Sandoval, Center for Civic Policy

“For far too long, our communities have suffered, first-hand, the health and environmental consequences of methane leaks from oil and gas operations across New Mexico. As we move forward into a clean energy future, we must ensure that oil and gas operations are held to the highest standards, to protect our environment and the wellbeing of frontline communities. This legislation is boldly safeguarding disproportionately impacted communities and addresses the climate crisis head-on.”

Sr. Joan Brown, New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light

“We have a moral and ethical responsibility to care for our communities and their health, for sacred creation and future generations. For too long methane pollution from oil and gas industry has caused health problems and has been a large contributor to the climate crisis. The proposed methane legislation is responsible stewardship. People of faith in New Mexico have worked for these changes for a long time and are grateful for legislative leadership to care for Our Common Home.”

Camilla Feibelman, Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter Director

We are so grateful to Representative Leger Fernandez and Stansbury for voting 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.”

Erik Schlenker-Goodrich, Executive Director, Western Environmental Law Center

We have waited for too long for action to cut chronic methane pollution and waste from oil and gas development. We applaud today’s vote as exemplifying the congressional leadership we need and deserve to better safeguard people and communities from the climate crisis and to deliver on environmental justice. That said, there is much more work for Congress and EPA to do to ensure meaningful action to cut methane, further address the climate crisis, and ensure that fossil fuel companies do not trample over the rights and interests of frontline and energy dependent communities. The time for sustained, unapologetic climate leadership is now.

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