

Central California Environmental Justice Network · Chispa | League of Conservation Voters · Chispa Arizona | League of Conservation Voters · Chispa Nevada | League of Conservation Voters · Climate Parents · Green Chicano · Green Latinos · Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities · IDEAS For Us · Juntos: Our Air, Our Water | Conservation Voters NM Education Fund · Latino Victory Project · League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) · MANA: A National Latina Organization · Mi Familia Vota · National Hispanic Medical Association · Protegete: Nuestro Aire, Nuestra Salud | Conservation Colorado · Voto Latino

December 1, 2015

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

CC: White House

As leaders of the undersigned Latino organizations and concerned communities, we are writing to support EPA's proposed methane pollution standard for the oil and gas industry. Our institutions are representative of the more than 55 million Latinos living in the United States^[1] and we stand in defense of our community's access to good healthcare, economic prosperity, environmental safety, and individual well-being.

As a leading source of methane -- a significant driver of short-term changes to the climate -- emissions from the oil and gas industry must be regulated to protect our communities from unhealthy pollution and from the worsening impacts of climate change. This issue is personal. Across the United States, our communities are among the first and worst impacted by climate change and unhealthy air quality, both of which are exacerbated by pollution from the oil and gas industry. One out of every two Latinos live in one of the country's worst counties for air pollution,^[2] and as oil and gas pollution and climate change make our air quality worse, our families' health declines.

Additionally problematic, most of the global warming we will see in the next two decades is driven by methane and other short term climate pollutants, and Latino communities face greater threats from climate change because of where we live, work, play and worship. For example, Latinos are more likely to work in the outdoor industries most impacted climate-exacerbated extreme heat, such as construction, maintenance, and agriculture.^[3]

We know to be true what recent polling has proved: that 85 percent of Latinos believe reducing air pollution is an important issue our leaders need to address and 74 percent believe the same of preventing global warming.^[4] This is why addressing methane pollution from the oil and gas industry is so important. Solutions to cut methane emissions are readily available and highly cost effective,^[5] and they will help save a valuable American energy source while protecting our health and mitigating the impacts of climate change on Latinos and all Americans.

We look forward to seeing the strongest possible methane standard finalized alongside a rule to limit methane pollution from existing sources, to achieve the full methane emissions reductions goal from the oil and gas industry announced by the White House. We thank you for your leadership and stand ready to work with you to safeguard clean air and a stable environment for our communities and families, now and in the future.

Sincerely,

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[1] <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045214/00#headnote-js-b>

[2] <http://www.nrdc.org/air/files/LatinoAirReport.pdf>

[3] <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsrace2013.pdf>

[4] <http://earthjustice.org/features/poll-latino-opinion>

[5] <https://www.edf.org/energy/icf-methane-cost-curve-report>