

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Director (630)
Mail Stop 2134LM
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

April 23, 2018

Attention: 1004-AE53

BLM Methane and Waste Prevention Rule and Protecting Latino Communities

Bureau of Land Management,

We write to insist on the protection of the BLM Methane and Waste Prevention Rule and adamantly oppose any revisions to the rule that would allow the harmful release of methane gas from existing and new developments on our public lands. It is the right of all Americans, including Latinos who are disproportionately affected by the health impacts of oil and gas development, to live in environmentally safe and economically vibrant communities. The BLM Methane and Waste Prevention Rule was written to help to ensure our communities have clean air, our natural resources are managed responsibly, and American taxpayers see a fair share of returns.

The Trump Administration's refusal to implement the rule and current proposal to rewrite or repeal the rule is out of step with the needs and wants of Americans. The process taken to draft the BLM Methane Rule was transparent and fair; over 300,000 people commented in favor of the rule, which followed the request of the Government Accountability Office and DOI Office of Inspector General to revise outdated rules governing methane collection. Additionally, a clear message was sent last year when Congress rejected the Congressional Review Act Resolution, which was designed to overturn the rule.

Additionally, we know that Latinos are disproportionately affected by the health impacts of oil and gas development. The report by the National Hispanic Medical Association and LULAC, *Latino Communities At Risk: The Impact of Air Pollution from the Oil and Gas Industry* found that "The air in many Latino communities violates air quality standards for ozone. More than one in four people in the U.S. live in areas that violate the federal air pollution standard for ozone. This includes over 23 million Latinos- more than one in three Latinos in the U.S. Many Latino communities face an elevated risk of cancer due to toxic air emissions from oil and gas development."

The BLM Methane Rule is a win for the American public, protecting our health and ensuring the productive use of our natural resources. We ask that you take in to account all of the comments that you have received to date who believe that all American communities deserve to breathe clean air and that the U.S. should be a leader in limiting this dangerous waste.

It is important that the Administration respect the wants and needs of Americans, as well as, the vote of the Senate to uphold this rule. **We urge you to maintain the rule in its current format and put the interests of all Americans ahead of the private interests of the oil and gas industry.**

Sincerely,

Irene Vilar
Founder & CEO
Americas For Conservation + Arts

Marce Gutiérrez-Graudiņš
Founder / Director
Azul

Felipe Benetiz
Executive Director
Corazon Latino

Ernesto Vargas
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Mark Magana
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