

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20500

c/o Office of the U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate  
c/o Office of the White House National Climate Advisor

April 6, 2021

As organizations focused on protecting the environment and public health, we thank you for rejoining the Paris Agreement and centering the climate crisis as a key goal of your administration. Following the United States' four-year regression on climate policy, your forthcoming announcement of a new nationally determined contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement offers you an opportunity to solidify your position as a global leader – and galvanize climate action around the world – by setting ambitious targets that meet the scale and urgency of the crisis.

Including a strong methane target in the NDC would make a vital contribution toward an ambitious overall greenhouse gas reduction goal and is consistent with your goal of keeping the 1.5C degree guardrail in sight. Indeed, it won't be possible to achieve this goal without fast mitigation of methane. Reducing methane emissions represents a prime opportunity to rein in warming over the next two decades, helping to protect vulnerable communities already experiencing serious impacts from climate change. It's also technologically attainable: an economy-wide methane reduction of at least 40 percent is realistic by 2030. The majority of those reductions could come from the fossil fuel sector; indeed, by 2025, your administration can ensure low-cost methane reductions of 65 percent from the oil and gas industry, relative to 2005 levels, using its existing Clean Air Act authority.<sup>1</sup>

A strong methane emissions target would put the U.S. in good company with its global peers as well. In October of 2020, the European Commission released the EU's "methane strategy," signaling the start of a process to develop legislation to tackle methane pollution. In 2018, Canada and Mexico issued strong methane standards for the oil and gas sector, and many other countries are considering following their lead. By the same token, a strong U.S. commitment on methane pollution would help galvanize similar action from other major global emitters like China, India, and Russia. If executed correctly, the NDC can become the fulcrum for leveraging international action on methane and other short-lived climate pollutants.

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<sup>1</sup> Clean Air Task Force, Reducing Methane from Oil and Gas: A Path to a 65% Reduction in Sector Emissions (Dec. 2020) <https://www.catf.us/resource/reducing-methane-from-oil-and-gas/>.

The world will be watching when you take to the podium to reintroduce the U.S. on the world stage. On behalf of our millions of members who have spoken out in favor of strong methane pollution standards, we urge you to announce a strong methane reduction goal, taking an immediate bite out of U.S. emissions and ushering in a new era of U.S. leadership on climate change.

Sincerely,

Armond Cohen, Executive Director, Clean Air Task Force

Abigail Dillen, President, Earthjustice

Jennifer Krill, Executive Director, Earthworks

Fred Krupp, President, Environmental Defense Fund

Mark Magaña, Founding President & CEO, GreenLatinos

Durwood Zaelke, President, Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development

Gene Karpinski, President, League of Conservation Voters

Mitch Bernard, President & Chief Counsel, Natural Resources Defense Council

Michael Brune, Executive Director, Sierra Club