



# Reinstating a Strong Foundation for Methane Limits

Adopting Senate Joint Resolution 14 will clear the path for EPA to move forward with sensible safeguards for methane pollution from oil and gas production.

## Methane harms health, drives climate change, wastes resources

The primary ingredient of natural gas, methane, is a powerful climate pollutant that will trap over 80 times more heat than carbon dioxide over the next 20 years. Methane is responsible for around 25% of the impacts of climate change we are experiencing today.

The oil and gas industry is one of the nation's largest sources of methane pollution. Operators leak and vent methane into the atmosphere when they extract, store and transport oil and gas throughout the supply chain.

In 2019, U.S. oil and gas companies emitted more than **16.3 million metric tons of methane**. Eliminating this pollution would have the same climate benefit as:

- Turning off all of the coal plants in America for a year and a half.
- Taking all of the nation's passenger vehicles off the road for a year.

This wasted gas was worth \$2.4 billion and could have been used to heat roughly 12.5 million homes for a year.

Oil and gas operations also contribute to unsafe levels of smog and emit toxic air pollutants, [harming the health of millions of people living in nearby communities](#).

## 2020 Loopholes undermine progress

Previously, the oil and gas industry was required to reduce methane emissions from their operations by updating equipment and conducting frequent inspections for leaks and malfunctions. This worked. The industry used cost-effective tools and off-the-shelf technologies to find and plug methane leaks and reduce venting and flaring.

In the waning days of 2020, the previous Administration directed EPA to eliminate all federal air pollution limits from oil and gas transmission and storage facilities and created legal confusion in an attempt to undermine further progress to reduce methane pollution. Those loopholes remain in effect today.

## Broad support for sensible methane limits

Support for reducing oil and gas methane emissions is widespread and bipartisan. Groups ranging from EDF to large operators, like BP and Shell, to the American Petroleum Institute (API) have expressed support for new rules to curb the industry's wasteful methane releases. [A recent poll](#) found 91 percent of Westerners support requiring companies to prevent methane leaks in their equipment and facilities.

Senate Joint Resolution 14 and the accompanying House Resolution create a clean slate for a normal regulatory process to strengthen methane standards at EPA. Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act, the resolutions will rescind the 2020 loopholes and immediately restore pollution protections.

These resolutions will put the U.S. in the best position to provide regulatory certainty, avoid delays and get reasonable, cost-effective methane regulations back on track.