

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday, August 13, 2020

Contact: Courtney Naquin, courtney.naquin@sierraclub.org, 409-779-7949

Trump Administration Gives Polluters a Free Pass for Methane Pollution

Washington, DC -- Today, the Trump administration is expected to finalize two rules that eliminate common sense Clean Air Act safeguards against methane and other harmful pollution from the oil and gas industry. These protections were implemented under the Obama administration and have been in place for four years. Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas that is 87 times more powerful than carbon dioxide during the time it remains in the atmosphere.

Not only are the Trump EPA's rollbacks expected to weaken requirements for oil and gas companies to monitor and repair leaking equipment, they will also strip away methane limits for this industry altogether. They are also expected to leave gas transmission and storage equipment entirely uncontrolled under a key Clean Air Act program.

In response, Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune released the following statement:

"The Trump administration is again admitting that they don't care if our families breathe dirtier air or suffer from devastating climate impacts as long as their corporate polluter friends see a bump in profits. The only people who will benefit from gutting these commonsense protections are the oil and gas executives seeking a free pass to release even more harmful air pollution while the public pays the price. We will pursue all legal avenues to fight back against this blatant attack on our environment and public health."

In response, Lone Star Chapter interim director Cyrus Reed released the following statement:

"No state is more impacted by this devastating rollback than Texas. With more oil and gas drilling than any other state, the Railroad Commission of Texas handing out exemptions to allow increased flaring and venting of methane like candy, and no state-specific rules on methane emissions by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Trump Administration's proposal will have compounding devastating effects on Texas' environment and public health. Now we must redouble our demand that our Texas political leaders and state agencies

immediately begin rulemaking to lower harmful emissions of methane and related toxic emissions. “