



MEDIA ADVISORY

Contacts:

In Denver Patrice Tomcik, 412-999-2360 or ptomcik@momscleanairforce.org
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MOMS DEFEND PROTECTIONS FROM METHANE POLLUTION AT PIVOTAL PUBLIC HEARING; TESTIMONY-GIVERS & EXPERTS AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT

(Denver—Monday, November 12th, 2018) — Parents across the country are outraged by a recent proposal by Trump’s Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to cripple existing protections that limit the amount of methane the oil and gas industry can release into our air. Children, especially those living near oil and gas operations, will face increased health risks including asthma attacks, respiratory diseases, and even cancer if methane controls are weakened.

On Wednesday, November 14th, a delegation of more than thirteen Moms Clean Air Force members from several states poised to be hit hardest by this dangerous roll-back—including **Colorado, Ohio, New Mexico, North Dakota, Pennsylvania and Texas**—will offer compelling testimony in favor of maintaining our existing safeguards, the New Source Performance Standards (NSPS)—better known as the “Methane Rule” which has been in place to protect Americans for more than one year.

Our passionate moms will tell it like it is: the EPA has a responsibility to protect America’s children from threats to their health, and this proposal is a direct violation of that responsibility. But there’s more: methane is also a key contributor to climate change—meaning regulating it is the one thing we can do immediately to avert climate catastrophe. It’s why moms all across the country are ready to hold the federal government accountable to provide vital safeguards from harmful oil and gas air pollution.

WHO:

We invite members of the media to speak with the following experts and testimony-givers for interviews during the hearing:

OHIO

Janet and George Ebenhoh from Richland County, OH

George Ebenhoh is a retired elementary teacher who lives in Richland County Ohio where there are multiple gas wells in his community including a gas well pad near his home. He is an active member of the Monroe Township Land Owners Coalition, a group formed to educate community about the oil and gas development in the county. George and his wife Janet, both of whom will deliver testimony at the hearing, are deeply concerned about the industry’s lasting impact on community health and livelihoods.

NORTH DAKOTA

Lisa Rask from Bismarck, ND:

Lisa represents her native state of North Dakota as a proud member of Mom's Clean Air Force, Dakota Resource Council, Badlands Conservation Alliance, and as a supporter of the work being done to preserve the natural beauty and environment of North Dakota. She is the daughter of a lifelong North Dakota farmer/rancher, a bookstore manager for over 20 years, and now the Business Manager of Braaten Law Firm, a local firm known for its staunch advocacy for environmental issues and landowners' rights. Together with her two children, Lisa frequently visits her state representatives to advocate for clean air and kids' health in a state that is the second largest crude oil producer in the nation and home to the Bakken formation.

See Lisa's [editorial](#) making the case that nothing could be more of a priority for our children than the safety of our air and water.

COLORADO:

Shaina Oliver from Denver, CO:

Shaina is a mother of four and a member of the Dinè/Navajo tribe whose tireless activism makes her a sought-after speaker. Decades of uranium mining left Shaina's reservation poisoned, resulting in higher rates of cancer and respiratory illness--illnesses that have taken the lives of many of Shaina's own family members. Today, she is a passionate activist for the rights of Native American communities and a cleaner environment.

[Read](#) Shaina's op-ed on clean air and kids' health here.

Maria Guerrero from Aurora, CO:

As a Latina mom living in Aurora, Maria is mindful of how critical Hispanic voter registration and mobilization is in a battleground state like Colorado. Her passion to inspire fellow Hispanic voters to consider how elections influence climate action at the state level prompted her involvement with Mi Familia Vota and Moms Clean Air Force. Maria's two girls are aged 3 and 5. With an older daughter who has been in the hospital for health reasons, Maria understands the importance of protecting our kids' health from all health threats including climate change.

Christine Berg from Lafayette, Colorado:

Christine Berg is mom to two young children and serves as mayor for the city of Lafayette, Colorado. Her community champions sustainability, but also borders significant oil and gas extraction (with over 20,000 oil and gas wells in the adjacent county). Christine advocates that regardless of borders, we all share the same air. She has been outspoken that methane regulations at the federal are critical to hold polluters accountable in protecting our kids' health.

TEXAS

Dee Dee from San Antonio, TX:

DeeDee Belmares is a lifelong Texas resident and Field Organizer for Moms Clean Air Force who has seen firsthand the damage that the oil and gas industry, specifically fracking, has done to her state. Texas is the number one oil and gas producer in the nation and a significant contributor of oil and gas air pollution that contributes to ground level ozone pollution or smog. Dee Dee lives in San Antonio which was recently designated in nonattainment for ozone and knows that weakening EPA methane standards would be taking a step backwards in protections for the air her 15 year old son, Austin, breathes.

PENNSYLVANIA:

Jane Worthington from Washington County, PA:

Jane Worthington lives in Washington County, Pennsylvania, where she and her family live side by side with intense fracking operations in her community. Along with methane, oil and gas extraction often releases other air pollutants like benzene – a known carcinogen. Coinciding with gas well activity near her school, Jane's daughter developed many health symptoms and was subsequently confirmed as benzene-exposed. Jane worries every day that her daughter's health has suffered because of her proximity to the 22 gas wells surrounding the school approximately a half mile away. As a nurse and moral being, Jane has shifted gears in her life to become an outspoken and sought-after advocate for the health of all impacted and vulnerable populations.

Read more about Jane in this blog [here](#).

Patrice Tomcik from Butler County, PA:

Patrice Tomcik is the Pennsylvania Field Consultant and the National Oil & Gas Program Coordinator for Moms Clean Air Force. Patrice lives in Butler County about 30 minutes north of Pittsburgh, PA where natural gas development is rampant. Her children go to school ½ mile away from a natural gas well pad and a pipeline that puts 3,200 children's health and safety at risk. Patrice is passionate about public health and advocating for a healthy environment at home, school, and outdoors for children. She focuses on protecting children from the health and safety risks of oil and gas operations through education programs, advocacy actions, and policy work at the local, state, and federal levels. Her hobbies are exercising, reading, gardening, and sports with her sons.

NEW MEXICO

Gloria Lehmer from Farmington, NM:

As a lifelong resident of Farmington and healthcare professional for more than two decades, Gloria has seen up-close all aspects of the fossil fuel industry in her hometown and lives under the methane hot spot. This methane cloud is the largest area of elevated methane concentration ever measured in the U.S., and is so big scientists can spot it from space. As an active member of her community as well as a mother of six and grandmother to eight adoring children, Gloria is compelled to speak out against the health harms associated with reckless methane pollution.

WHEN: Wednesday, November 14th 2018. The EPA's public hearing will go from 8AM until 8PM.

WHERE: [EPA Region 8 Offices](#), 1595 Wynkoop Street, Denver, CO 80202. Please account for about 30 minutes to get through security in case of long lines. We can also schedule interviews with our members off-site nearby at The Alliance Center. Please reach out to below-listed media contacts to coordinate.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

In Denver:

Patrice Tomcik, Oil & Gas Specialist with Moms Clean Air Force

Cell: 412-999-2360 and email: ptomcik@moms-clean-air-force.org

Available for interviews and also to coordinate interviews for testimony-givers from **PA, OH, NM, TX**

Christine Berg, mayor for the city of Lafayette, Colorado and Colorado Field Organizer for Moms Clean Air Force

Cell: 720-442-1612 and email: cberg@moms-clean-air-force.org

Available for interviews and also to coordinate interviews with testimony-givers from **CO, ND**

In Washington, D.C. for back-stopping support, please contact:

Sasha Tenenbaum, stenenbaum@moms-clean-air-force.org, 917-887-0146

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

1. Our Petition: Moms Clean Air Force launched a petition to stop the Trump EPA's attacks on methane pollution protections [here](#).
2. Our "Face to Face with Oil & Gas" report found [here](#) highlights the moving stories of seven women from across the country living face to face with this dangerous pollution.
3. The Oil & Gas Threat Maps 2.0 found [here](#) shows health impacts from oil and gas air pollution.
4. Map of every well in US covered by the New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) that limit methane emissions and the accompanying toxic pollution from [36,000 recently built or updated oil and gas wells](#) across the country.
5. EPA is [accepting public comments](#) on the proposed roll-back of safeguards meant to curb methane pollution until December 17th 2018.

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[Moms Clean Air Force](#) is a community of more than 1,000,000 moms—and dads—working together to combat air pollution, including the urgent crisis of our changing climate, for the sake of our children's health.