MOMS CLEAN AIR FORCE OPPOSES TRUMP’S PLAN TO GUT CRITICAL EPA METHANE SAFEGUARDS

Public Comment Period Closes Today After Only One Public Hearing

November 25, 2019 – In August, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler proposed to eliminate direct regulation of methane pollution from new and modified oil and gas facilities. This proposal would be a major step backward in the effort to address climate change and a thinly veiled attempt to shield oil and gas facilities from national standards for years to come while ignoring EPA's core mission to protect public health and the environment.

Today, the public comment period for this dangerous rollback—a giveaway to industry polluters—will close after just one public hearing in Dallas, TX, in October. Moms Clean Air Force members will be delivering more than 5,000 petition signatures opposing the rollback to the EPA office in Washington, DC, at 10:00 a.m. EST.

"Oil and gas operations are leaking, venting, and flaring dangerous climate pollution at alarming rates. This industry needs to clean up its act. Voluntary measures are not working, and children are already being exposed to harmful air pollution. This proposal is a direct threat to our children's health and future," said Patrice Tomcik, project manager for state campaigns, Moms Clean Air Force. "The fact that Administrator Wheeler would propose such a dangerous rollback and then not give ample opportunity for public comment across the country is unconscionable.

"The climate crisis is a public health emergency, exacerbating air pollution and fueling extreme weather. Families across the country are experiencing more wildfires, more powerful hurricanes, an increase in extreme droughts, and more flooding. Extreme heat caused by climate change is dangerous for babies, children, pregnant women, older adults, and people with underlying health conditions, such as asthma," said Tomcik, who lives in heavily fracked Southwestern Pennsylvania with her family. "We need urgent action to address the climate crisis. Rolling back these pollution standards represents a major step backward in our efforts to protect our children's health and future from runaway climate change.

"Oil and gas operations also release other harmful air pollutants, putting children who are in close proximity to oil and gas operations—such as my sons, who attend school a half mile from natural gas wells—at increased risk of exposure to cancer-causing chemicals such as benzene and toluene. Methane pollution safeguards are critical in the fight against climate change, and they also help protect my family's health from harmful air pollutants.

"Moms strongly oppose this proposal from Trump's EPA, and we will continue to fight for vital methane safeguards to reduce climate pollution and clean up the air for families like mine who are living, learning, and playing near oil and gas operations. With the close of the public comment period, EPA now is required to consider and respond to the thousands of comments it received about this dangerous rollback. We urge the agency to prioritize our kids' health and future while it considers the groundswell of public opposition to this rollback."

Oil and gas operations across the US release over 13 million metric tons of climate-warming methane a year. This pollution accounts for 25 percent of the global warming we are experiencing today. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas more than 80 times more powerful than carbon dioxide in the near term.

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About Moms Clean Air Force:
Moms Clean Air Force is a community of over one million moms—and dads—working together to fight air pollution, including the urgent crisis of our changing climate. Learn more at www.momscleanairforce.org, or follow us on Twitter @CleanAirMoms, Instagram @cleanairmoms, or Facebook.