

March 27, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
2433 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Speaker McCarthy, Leader Jeffries, and Honorable Members of the House of Representatives,

Reducing oil and gas methane emissions is one of the most efficient and effective ways to address climate change, reduce needless waste, and protect the health of the millions of Americans living in or around active oil and gas sites. Congress made clear that addressing methane was a priority when they passed the Methane Emissions Reduction Program (MERP) in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) last year.

The groups listed below **strongly oppose Section 10013 of H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Cost Act. This section of the bill would repeal the MERP, and in doing so harm the climate, impair public health, increase waste, and imperil economic benefits already being realized as a result of the program.**

The MERP includes several important provisions that will help put the U.S. on a path to quickly cut methane emissions, which have already warmed the planet 0.5°C (total warming to date is about 1°C).<sup>1</sup> These provisions include a waste emissions charge (WEC), which only applies to operators with large facilities that release over 25,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent greenhouse gas emissions each year. These large oil and gas operators are only responsible for paying the charge for the portion of emissions exceeding industry-developed, performance-based targets, and many large operators will not be required to pay any fees because they have already made investments to reduce their emissions. Similarly, an independent operator with hundreds of low-producing wells within a particular basin would likely be exempt from the charge.<sup>2</sup> And of course, operators will be able to avoid assessed fees by making modest investments to reduce emissions and decrease waste.

MERP also includes \$1.55 billion in funding that state agencies, communities, and oil and gas operators can use to reduce methane emissions by advancing and promoting controls to reduce emissions. These efforts and investments would further stimulate economic growth by creating tens of thousands of high-paying, good-quality American jobs in the ever-growing methane mitigation industry,<sup>3</sup> all the while reducing needless waste by incentivizing operators to capture methane that would otherwise have been emitted into the atmosphere.

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<sup>1</sup> IPCC, WGI, Summary for Policymakers 7 (2021), [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_WGI\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See for example: <https://www.ogci.com/action-and-engagement/reducing-methane-emissions/#methane-target> and <https://onefuture.us/2022-methane-emissions-intensity-report/>

<sup>3</sup> CATF. (2022) "Good Rules, Good Jobs: Employment Opportunities From Emissions Standards for Oil and Gas." [https://cdn.catf.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/04105136/CATF\\_OilGasJobsReport-1.pdf](https://cdn.catf.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/04105136/CATF_OilGasJobsReport-1.pdf)

MERP is a forward-looking program, set to put the U.S. on a path of successfully and efficiently reducing oil and gas methane emissions and spurring economic innovation in methane mitigation. The standards and limits set in MERP are in line with the industry-set goals, and many operators understand the need to lower their emissions and have already started doing so. With this in mind, **we strongly oppose Section 10013 of H.R. 1 and the threat it poses to the environment, the economy, and individuals throughout the country.**

We thank you for your consideration and stand ready to support your efforts to continue implementing MERP and reducing methane emissions in all sectors.

Sincerely,

Breathe Utah  
Ceres  
Change the Chamber  
Clean Air Council  
Clean Air Task Force  
Conservation Voters New Mexico  
Dakota Resource Council  
Defend Our Future  
Earthjustice  
Earthworks  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Green America  
GreenLatinos  
Jewish Climate Action Network for DC, Maryland and Virginia  
Keep It Wild  
League of Conservation Voters  
Liveable Arlington  
Moms Clean Air Force  
National Parks Conservation Association  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
New Mexico & El Paso Interfaith Power and Light  
Northern Plains Resource Council  
Ohio Environmental Council  
Oxfam America  
PA-Jewish Earth Alliance  
Pennsylvania Environmental Council  
Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania  
Responsible Decarbonization Alliance  
Sierra Club  
The Wilderness Society  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Waterkeeper Alliance

Western Colorado Alliance  
Western Environmental Law Center  
Western Leaders Network