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COLORADO, NEW MEXICO ELECTED OFFICIALS CONDEMN FEDERAL COURT DECISION RULING 2016 METHANE RULE UNLAWFUL

“Despite federal court opinions that the Department of Interior has a responsibility to prevent harmful natural gas waste, the Trump Administration has once again sided with the oil and gas industry over Western taxpayers and disappointingly the U.S. District Court for the District of Wyoming sided with them last night in its ruling the 2016 Methane Waste Prevention Rule. Methane is responsible for 25 percent of the global warming we experience today, and the Four Corners where I live is home to the largest methane cloud in North America. This decision to sabotage safeguards designed to reduce this unnecessary waste and protect the public interest betrays Western communities.” – Gwen Lachelt, La Plata County Commissioner

“New Mexico, like many Western states, struggles to fund its public services and infrastructure, and, above all, our schools. As both an educator and local leader in New Mexico, I’m disturbed with the Trump Administration’s efforts to repeal rules that cut this waste and increase local revenue. Methane in the form of natural gas is a taxable public resource, and capturing more of it equates to monies for our services and schools. This move fails communities like mine across the West that would not only welcome but desperately need additional revenue. We can’t afford this needless waste.” – Victor Snover, Mayor of Aztec

Background

The Department of Interior’s BLM Waste Prevention Rule was created in 2016, requiring oil and gas companies to reduce preventable leaks and flaring of natural gas on public and tribal lands. The leaking, venting and flaring of natural gas releases methane and other pollutants into the air. Since the rule’s enactment, the Trump administration has made several attempts to suspend and rescind the rule through both Congress and in the courts.