



CREATION JUSTICE MINISTRIES

Justice for God's planet and God's people.

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Creation Justice Ministries Statement on EPA Methane Standards

Christian Faith Communities Applaud New Limits on Methane Emissions

Creation Justice Ministries applauds the national standards aimed at cutting emissions of methane pollution from oil and gas operations.

Reducing methane pollution can moderate the near term impacts of climate change. To care for all of God's creation, we must act with urgency to abate climate change. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas, with 25 times the heat-trapping potential of CO₂ over a 100-year period. Methane emission restrictions address climate change: a ton of methane in the atmosphere warms the climate more than 80 times as much as a ton of CO₂ during the 20 years after release.

The new rule will protect our communities' health. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, and if we can prevent pollution that harms our bodies, we are called to do so. Oil and gas operations emit smog-forming volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and cancer-causing pollutants like benzene. Strong methane pollution standards, which include limiting VOCs, will deliver significant public health benefits by cutting emissions of these toxic air pollutants.

We want our government and industry leaders to follow through on this act of stewardship. From a Christian faith perspective, we see natural resources such as methane as gifts God has given us to share justly. Just sharing of a resource like methane for natural gas means ensuring as much of it as possible is reserved for our communities' home heating and cooking needs, rather than allowing it to wastefully vent into the air. A primary function of our government is to help us manage natural resources. Under the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency has clear authority to develop methane standards for the oil and gas industry. We need extractive industry professionals to partner with government to steward the finite amount of methane (the primary component of natural gas) available.

This is a justice issue. Climate change and poor air quality disproportionately affect children, older adults, and those who are least responsible for contributing to large-scale pollution: people of color, people with low incomes, and people from countries with low greenhouse gas emissions. Likewise, when resources get scarce, these are the communities that often are forced to go without.

As people of faith, we are called to care for God's creation and our neighbors, particularly those who are most vulnerable. National standards on methane will help care for these vulnerable communities by curbing climate change, improving air quality, and responsibly stewarding finite resources. We look forward to working with the Administration to ensure we maintain a strong rule that holds the oil and gas industry accountable to the communities most impacted by climate change and protects the health of our communities now and into the future.