

June 28, 2016

The Honorable Gina McCarthy  
Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460  
June 28, 2016

Dear Administrator McCarthy,

As religious leaders in Pennsylvania, we are concerned with climate change and its impact on the human community. Our faith traditions teach us that we are stewards, not owners, of God's creation for current and future generations. We write to thank you for your commitment to addressing methane pollution, and to urge you to issue national standards that cut emissions of this harmful pollutant from existing oil and gas operations.

Under the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency is granted clear authority to develop methane standards for the oil and gas industry. We believe that the implementation of precise standards helps to protect human and nonhuman communities by controlling natural gas and methane emissions.

Methane is a highly potent heat-trapping pollutant. According to the IPCC, one ton of atmospheric methane contributes to planetary warming more than 86 times as much as a ton of CO<sub>2</sub> during the twenty years after release. The Environmental Protection Agency must address methane pollution immediately and thoroughly in order to prevent the most devastating impacts of climate change.

Oil and gas sources also emit other dangerous pollutants that harm Americans' health, such as smog-forming volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and cancer-causing toxics like benzene. To protect public health, stronger methane pollution standards must include regulations on VOCs.

Climate change is one of the great moral issues of our time. Methane, a dominant contributor to climate disruption, must be subject to stricter government concern and action. Today, we witness the heavy burden placed on those who are least responsible for climate change. As people of faith, we are called to care for children, the elderly, and the poor. We believe that issuing national standards on existing methane sources in the oil and gas industry will help care for these vulnerable communities.

We applaud your leadership and urge you to continue to protect human health and God's creation by issuing a strong national existing source methane standard. As faith leaders we urge the EPA to use the strongest regulatory tools and provisions of law available to protect the public and move quickly to create safeguards for existing oil and gas facilities.

Sincerely,

Bishop James B. Walker, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church Seventh Episcopal District  
Rev. Sandra Strauss, Pennsylvania Council of Churches

Rev. Alison Cornish, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light  
Rabbi Seth Adelson, Congregation Beth Shalom, Pittsburgh  
Rev. J. Howard Cherry, Pittsburgh  
Rev. Karen Moeschberger, St. John's United Church of Christ, Allentown  
Rev. Christy Dowdy, Huntingdon  
Rev. Charlotte Whiting, United Church of Christ, Lancaster  
Rev. Rodney Martin, Lititz  
Rev. Douglas Hunt, Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light, Haverford  
Rev. David Carlisle, Verona  
Rev. David Ackerman, Penn West Conference United Church of Christ, Greensburg  
Rev. Samuel B. Jordan, Jr., New Gethsemane Baptist, Philadelphia  
Rev. William J. Shaw, White Rock Baptist, Philadelphia  
Rev. Darryl T. Canady, Rodman Street MBC, Pittsburg  
Rev. A. Carl Prince, Zion Baptist, Philadelphia  
Rev. Benjamin T. Halley, Union Baptist, Allentown  
Rev. Patrick Cheston, Christian Hope MBC, Philadelphia  
Rev. Vernon S. Thompson, Morris Chapel Baptist, Philadelphia  
Rev. Joseph D. Lewis, Trinity AME Zion Church, Pittsburgh  
Rev. T.R. Nicholson Greater Faith M.B. Church, Philadelphia  
Rev. Patrick Barrett, St. Paul AME Zion Church, Media  
Rev. Ronald Green, Sr., Hickman Temple AME, Philadelphia  
Rev. Ray Hammond, Bethel AME Church, West Chester  
Rev. Gracher L. Selby, St. John AME Zion, Bethlehem  
Rev. Linwood Smith, Jr., Mt. Zion AME Church, Atglen  
Rev. Mark K. Tyler, Bethel AME Church, Philadelphia  
Rev. Paul J. Thomas, AME Union Church, Philadelphia  
Rev. Glenn Shepherd Morris Brown AME, Philadelphia  
Rev. David Randolph, Sr., St. Matthew's AME, Philadelphia  
Bishop Claude Barnes Church of Faith, Inc, Philadelphia  
Bishop James McNeal, Jr., Church of New Faith, Philadelphia  
Rev. Bruce Gibson New Destiny CME, Pittsburgh  
Rev. Arthur Green, Holsey Temple CME, Philadelphia  
Rev. Bonita C. Hobbs, Mt. Zion CME, Darby Township  
Rev. Mark Terwilliger, Countryside Community United Methodist Church, Clarks Summit  
Rev. Inge Williams, Shoemakersville  
Rev. Susan Jamison, Lewisburg  
Rev. Dale Dennis, II, Russell Tabernacle CME, Philadelphia  
Rev. Queen Dickey, St. John CME, Harrisburg  
Rev. Aaron Donnelly, St. Paul CME, Chester  
Rev. William Irons, St. Matthew CME, Twin Oaks  
Rev. Derrick Price, Williams Temple CME, Philadelphia  
Rev. Travis C. Coon, Antioch Baptist, Sewickley  
Elder Ronald Burnett, Christian Teaching Ministries Pittsburgh  
Rev. Selbie Jones Coraoplis C.O.G.I.C., Pittsburgh

Rev. John A. Knight, Cornerstone Baptist, Pittsburgh  
Elder Curtis Lewis, El-Beth EI Temple, Pittsburgh  
Rev. James E. Hunt, First Baptist-Penn Hills, Pittsburgh  
Rev. Les Boone Hazelwood Presbyterian, Pittsburgh  
Rev. Theodore Pugh, Sr. Jerusalem Baptist, Pittsburgh  
Rev. L.C. Carter King of Kings Baptist, Pittsburgh  
Rev. Keith Moncrief, Missionary Temple COGIC, Pittsburgh  
Rev. Barbara A. Gunn, Mt. Carmel Baptist North Versailles  
Rev. Louis Otey Jr., New Covenant Christian, Swissvale  
Rev. Paul Metzloff, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Dallas  
Rev. Dr. Jane Ellen, Nickell, Allegheny College, Meadville