



January 20, 2015

Dear President Obama,

On behalf of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs and the Union for Reform Judaism, representing a broad cross section of the North American Jewish community, we write to express our support for curbing greenhouse gas emissions through strong action limiting industrial methane pollution from the oil and gas industry.

As Jews, protecting the environment is one of our core values. We believe that we have an obligation to “till and tend” our earth in partnership with God as humankind was commanded in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15). In the face of already-evident climate change, rising sea levels, increasing rates of ocean acidification, and decreased biodiversity, we worry about our ability to pass on a heritable earth to the next generation.

Methane pollution is a wasteful and unnecessary environmental hazard that is more than eighty times more potent than carbon dioxide pollution when it comes to disrupting our climate in the short term. Increased levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere have detrimental effects on our environment and our health. Emissions from methane pollution fuel climate change, create smog, trigger asthma attacks, and contribute to cancer. Strengthening limits on this waste will improve air quality and move the nation forward in meeting its obligation to address the threat of climate change.

We welcome the news that you will soon propose stronger methane gas targets that by 2025 would reduce methane emissions from oil and gas to 45 percent of 2012 levels. Once reached, these levels will save millions of tons of natural gas each year while helping protect local air quality and reduce one of the most potent threats to the global climate.

We appreciate the hard work your Administration, including the EPA, has done to prioritize reducing greenhouse gases both domestically and internationally. We urge you to proceed with sensible policies to cut methane emissions and confront climate change. We look forward to working with you and your Administration during this process and continuing the critical work of protecting the earth for our children and our children’s children.

Sincerely,

Jared Feldman  
Washington Director & Vice President  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Barbara Weinstein  
Associate Director  
Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) is the American Jewish community’s umbrella agency for multi-issue organizations engaged in public policy and community relations. Our membership includes 17 national organizations and 125 local affiliates. The JCPA’s program, the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, is the American Jewish community’s central environmental advocacy body.

The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism is the Washington office of the Union for Reform Judaism, whose nearly 900 congregations across North America encompass 1.5 million Reform Jews, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, whose membership includes more than 2,000 Reform rabbis.