



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Docket ID EPA-HQ-OAR-2010-0505-7736
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20460

Testimony of Jessica Eckdish from the BlueGreen Alliance for Docket ID EPA-HQ-OAR-2010-0505-7736

Hi, my name is Jessica Eckdish and I am the Senior Policy Advisor for the BlueGreen Alliance, a coalition of the nation's largest labor unions and environmental organizations, collectively representing millions of members and supporters. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in opposition to EPA's proposed delay of its June 2016 new source performance standards for the oil and gas industry.

The oil and gas industry is the largest source of methane emissions in the U.S. Lost and leaking natural gas costs billions of dollars every year—nationwide, these activities waste the amount of gas it takes to heat nearly 7 million homes. These emissions are often due to outmoded practices and technology utilized by the industry. This waste is unnecessary. Common sense and cost-effective solutions exist today to significantly reduce these emissions.

Reducing methane emissions in the United States is a great example of how America's environmental challenges can also be economic opportunities. Methane is a greenhouse gas that is many times more potent than carbon dioxide and the second largest contributor to climate change. Together with other dangerous pollutants that are released from oil and gas equipment, these emissions also damage air quality, and threaten the health and wellbeing of workers in the industry and nearby communities who are on the front lines of this exposure.

Reducing methane emissions can reap economic benefits for workers and communities across the country. A recent BlueGreen Alliance report estimates that by implementing the kinds of practices and technologies required under the standards, nearly 5,400 direct and indirect jobs will be created annually in a variety of sectors. With full and continuing adoption of these leak reducing technologies and practices at new and modified oil and gas facilities, over 50,000 jobs would be created over the first decade.

These jobs are often quality, family-sustaining union jobs – operating, monitoring, repairing and modernizing our nation's natural gas facilities. There are also currently 76 companies nationwide that manufacture, sell, and support the proven and cost-effective methane mitigation technologies available today.

Delaying these standards would be a significant missed opportunity to create and sustain quality jobs, while protecting workers, communities, and the environment. We urge the EPA not to delay these common-sense standards.