



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

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

My name is Lee Geisse and I am the Regional Program Manager for Ohio for the BlueGreen Alliance, which unites America's largest labor unions and its most influential environmental organizations to solve today's environmental challenges in ways that create and maintain quality jobs and build a stronger, fairer economy.

The BlueGreen Alliance opposes EPA's proposed delay of its June 2016 standards for new and modified sources of methane in the oil and gas industry and urges the administration to not delay and instead move forward with these and other common-sense efforts to reduce methane emissions.

While the nation's energy sector has made significant strides to increase the efficiency of our natural gas systems in recent years, leaking methane continues to harm the economy and the environment. The energy sector leaks dangerous and wasteful pollutants into our air from oil and natural gas wells, pipelines, tanks and other equipment. These can be due to accidental releases, but often are due to outmoded practices and obsolete technology.

In my home state of Ohio alone, natural gas producers reported wasting more than 13,000 metric tons of methane. This is enough natural gas to heat nearly 8,500 Ohio homes and this number is likely an underestimate because only large oil and gas operations are required to report their emissions, but methane leaks can occur from wells and equipment of all sizes. Reducing methane leaks in the oil and gas sector will cut down on this waste while creating quality jobs, protecting workers and helping address climate change.

In a report we released last year, we found that nearly 5,400 direct and indirect jobs will be created in the U.S. every year in a variety of sectors—including manufacturing—by adopting the leak-reducing technologies and practices that would be spurred by the EPA's standards. Over 50,000 jobs could be created nationally over the first decade of full implementation of these technologies and practices.

Unionized workers operate, monitor, repair and modernize our nation's natural gas facilities. They are also at the forefront of advancing safety, training, and quality throughout the natural gas sector, which, coupled with the improved technology and practices spurred by these standards, will result in natural gas systems that produce fewer emissions.

Workers, such as members of the United Steelworkers, are also at the forefront of manufacturing cost-effective, reliable materials and products to reduce methane leaks. In OH alone, there are 7 companies with 18 locations providing methane mitigation technologies and services.

In addition to creating good quality jobs, reducing methane emissions has the added benefit of protecting workers and communities. When methane leaks, workers in the industry and nearby communities are also exposed to smog-forming Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and toxic air pollutants, like the cancer-causing compound benzene.

Delaying these standards would be a huge missed opportunity to create and sustain quality jobs, reduce unnecessary waste, help address climate change, and protect workers, communities and the environment. We urge the EPA not to delay these common-sense standards to reduce methane in the U.S. oil and gas industry.

Thank you.