

**SANTA FE COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
RESOLUTION NO. 2018- 28**

**A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BUREAU OF
LAND MANAGEMENT PROPOSED REPEAL OF ITS METHANE RULE WHICH
WAS INTENDED TO REDUCE AND REGULATE METHANE LEAKING, VENTING
AND FLARING FROM OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS**

WHEREAS, energy development is critically important to the economy of both Santa Fe County and the State of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Mexico is among the nation's leading producers of oil and natural gas; and

WHEREAS, oil and gas revenue is the cornerstone of New Mexico's educational funding; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has the authority and duty to ensure a fair return for publicly owned oil and gas resources under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920; and

WHEREAS, the BLM finalized a rule in November 2016, to reduce and regulate methane leaking, venting and flaring from oil and gas operators on federal and tribal lands; and

WHEREAS, the requirements of the rule were due to take effect in January of 2018, until the BLM announced a delay in implementation of the rule for one year, until January 2019; and

WHEREAS, on February 12, 2018, the BLM proposed to repeal most of the provisions within the BLM methane rule; and

WHEREAS, a recent National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) study found that oil and gas operators remain the largest contributors of methane gas; and

WHEREAS, a 2014 NASA study discovered a large and highly concentrated methane plume in the Four Corners region where much of New Mexico's natural gas production occurs; and

WHEREAS, a 2013 report by ICF International Inc. found that a significant amount of natural gas, worth as much as \$330 million, was lost through leaking, venting and flaring on federal and tribal lands, which is enough natural gas to provide energy for 1.5 million homes for one year; and

WHEREAS, the BLM does not charge royalties or charges reduced royalty rates on methane, the primary component of natural gas that is leaked, vented and flared; and

WHEREAS, according to New Mexico Senate Memorial 29, introduced by Senator Benny Shendo, Jr. during the First Session of New Mexico's 52nd Legislature, nearly 45 percent of all BLM applications to flare royalty-free come from New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, according to Senate Memorial 29, estimates suggest that as much as 90 percent of natural gas wasted through flaring could be captured or put to use; and

WHEREAS, the state of Colorado saw a marked increase in natural gas production and job creation after adopting state rules to cut methane waste, with some companies addressing the issue prior to the rules adopted by the state; and

WHEREAS, reducing methane waste would bring critical public health benefits to our communities located near oil and gas extraction and processing sites, by simultaneously cutting ground-level ozone-forming gases and cancer-causing pollutants such as benzene and other volatile organic compounds; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the BLM methane rule would generate \$6.7 million to \$8.1 million in royalties for New Mexico – additional revenue critical to helping address education needs statewide; and

WHEREAS, efforts to eliminate methane emissions would likely create high-quality jobs, economic development in the domestic oil and gas manufacturing and service sectors, and provide much-needed royalty revenue to the state to invest in areas of greatest need.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners of Santa Fe County (BCC) opposes the BLM's proposal to repeal most requirements of the BLM methane rule.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the BCC fully supports implementation of the BLM methane rule to reduce the wasteful venting, leaking and flaring of natural gas from oil and gas operations occurring on federal and tribal lands, which rule protects the health, welfare and potential revenue rightfully due to the citizens of New Mexico.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be distributed to members of the New Mexico Congressional Delegation, members of the United States Senate, relevant units of the United States Department of the Interior including the BLM and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and to the New Mexico Association of Counties.

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND PASSED this 13th day of March, 2018.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Anna Hansen, Chair

Attestation:

Geraldine Salazar
Geraldine Salazar, County Clerk



Approved as to Form:

R. Bruce Frederick
R. Bruce Frederick, County Attorney

COUNTY OF SANTA FE) BCC RESOLUTIONS
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss PAGES: 3

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 15TH Day Of March, 2018 at 10:15:09 AM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1852328
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County



Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Geraldine Salazar
Deputy *E. Strubbe* County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

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SFC CLERK RECORDED 03/15/2018