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MADIGAN JOINS COALITION SEEKING TO INTERVENE IN LAWSUIT AGAINST U.S. EPA TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS & OTHER AIR POLLUTANTS

Madigan & 13 Attorneys General File Motion To Intervene & Oppose Stay of Standards to Cut Methane Emissions from New Facilities in the Oil & Natural Gas Industry

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today joined a coalition of 14 attorneys general and the City of Chicago in filing a motion in the U.S. Court of Appeals to intervene in a lawsuit against U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt's actions to halt regulation that would curb greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollutants from new sources in the oil and gas industry.

In seeking to intervene in the case — *Clean Air Council v. Pruitt* — Madigan and the other attorneys general are supporting a group of environmental organizations. These organizations are seeking to immediately stop the EPA's unlawful stay of a rule that was finalized in 2016 (the 2016 Rule) to prevent emissions of thousands of tons of the potent greenhouse gas methane, smog-forming volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and hazardous air pollutants, including benzene and formaldehyde from facilities constructed after September 2015. Pruitt announced in April that the EPA would halt the 2016 Rule, and on June 5, the agency implemented a 90-day administrative stay of the rule's key leak detection and repair requirements, along with an order to reconsider aspects of the 2016 Rule, which has been in place for nearly a year.

"The 2016 Rule is vital to protecting people and our environment from the horrible effects of toxic pollutants," Madigan said. "I join my colleagues in demanding that the EPA keep this common-sense rule in place."

The 2016 Rule requires oil and gas companies to monitor well sites and compressor stations constructed after September 2015 in order to detect air pollutant leaks and repair them.

According to scientific experts in the case, during the 90-day term of the administrative stay, more than 5,300 tons of methane, 1,475 tons of VOCs, and 56 tons of other hazardous air pollutants will be emitted. These damaging emissions would have been prevented if the EPA had not stopped the 2016 Rule.

The EPA has also signaled that it will seek to stay the 2016 Rule for an additional 27 months. If this further stay is implemented, experts predict at least 48,000 additional tons of methane, 13,000 tons of VOCs, and over 500 tons of hazardous air pollutants will be emitted.

Methane is a particularly powerful agent of climate change. Pound-for-pound, methane warms the climate about 34 times more than carbon dioxide over a 100-year period, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. On a 20-year timeframe, methane has about 86 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. According to the EPA, the oil and gas sector is the largest emitter of methane in the U.S.

In addition to today's action, Madigan has condemned federal executive action to attempt to eliminate the Clean Power Plan and opposed the drastic budget cuts proposed for the Environmental Protection Agency. Madigan has long supported the Clean Power Plan and the legal actions that led to it. The Attorney General also recently joined "We are Still In," a broad coalition of states and localities in support of the Paris climate change agreement.

Joining Madigan in filing the motion to intervene are the attorneys general from: Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington, in addition to the City of Chicago.

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