

Testimony for Control of VOC emissions for Oil and Gas Sources  
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Thank you for making this hearing “virtual”, thereby reducing the spread of Covid-19. I look forward to Pennsylvania being equally conscientious by reducing methane for the general health of the state and the changing climate.

In my experience, having observed a site of exploration and drilling of natural gas in Lycoming County, once the wells have been established there is almost no surveillance by the company. Consequently, any mishaps go unnoticed for a long time. These sites need to be regularly inspected by the DEP for the safety of those living in the vicinity and for the monitoring of methane. Monitoring of low producing wells on a regular basis is especially important as they are responsible for more than half of the methane emitted. The loophole in the draft rule for the low producing wells should be closed. There should be no provision in any regulation that permits the operators to reduce the frequency of inspections as they do not necessarily have the health of the people in Pennsylvania as one of their priorities.

Covid-19 has shed light on the importance of air quality. Pennsylvania has already some of the worst air in the nation and we should be doing whatever possible to improve it. Our citizens should not have to suffer from pollution of methane gas. It is up to the DEP to do whatever possible to reduce it for the health of its people.

As this same gas is responsible for 25 per cent of man-made global warming, we should be considering how the climate change has affected the state with hotter summers, the increase of damaging storms and floods, and damage to the agricultural sector.

To look at this in a more positive manner, there is room for Pennsylvania to take the lead in the methane mitigation sector, creating the technologies to find and fix emission leaks. We have the engineering talent in the state’s universities and the opportunity to provide entry level and highly skilled jobs for our deserving population.

