Gov. Lujan Grisham, NMED to EPA: Proposed rollbacks of oil and gas regulations violate state rights, endanger public health

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) submitted formal comments on Thursday to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in strong opposition to its proposal to rollback regulations on air emissions from the oil and gas industry.

“The Trump administration’s ongoing assault on the environment is unconscionable and must be fought at every opportunity,” said Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham. “This is a federal government that has made clear it wants to move backward – at a moment in time when we can least afford it. In the face of a climate crisis, and with a federal government that is committed to an anti-science, anti-environment regulatory approach, states like New Mexico will take up the mantle of leadership. We will lead the transition to a renewable energy economy and take aggressive steps to limit greenhouse gas emissions. The Trump administration will not slow our progress on climate action.”

Last month, the federal government proposed revisions to the New Source Performance Standards for the oil and gas sector. These revisions would relax emissions regulations by removing the transmission and storage portions of the industry from regulation and rescinding limits for methane emissions.

“If enacted, these rules will undermine our efforts to curb methane emissions and address the growing ozone problem across the state,” said NMED Cabinet Secretary James Kenney. “This proposal is seriously flawed.”

In addition to the public health and environmental implications of the proposed revisions, NMED also argues the process used by the EPA to propose the revisions preempts state law and failed to adequately engage states.

An NMED representative provided testimony on the rollbacks before the EPA last week in Dallas.