

Dear Chancellor McRaven,

We, the undersigned faculty and staff of The University of Texas are writing to urge University Lands (UL) to develop and implement strategies to reduce methane emissions at oil production facilities on UL land.

Administered by the UT System, UL manages the surface and mineral interests of 2.1 million acres of land in West Texas and leases more than 9,000 oil and gas wells to more than 300 operators. If these wells were pooled into one entity, it would be the fifth largest oil company in Texas.

Methane – the main ingredient of natural gas – is gaining visibility as an important greenhouse gas. Colorless and odorless, methane is more than 80 times more powerful a heat-trapper than carbon dioxide; ***scientists tell us that 25% of the global warming we’re experiencing today is due to methane.***

Using EPA data, one environmental group estimates that between 2009 and 2014, more than 344,000 metric tons of methane escaped from oil and gas operations on UL land. When converted to CO2e, the methane emitted from oil production facilities on UL land could exceed 1.95 million metric tons in any given year – more than seven times the total annual climate impact of the entire UT-Austin campus*.

Climate change represents one of the most significant and daunting challenges we face. We are proud of the leadership role The University of Texas has established in studying the impacts of climate change and spurring academic and commercial R&D for more sustainable and efficient energy solutions. We support the UT System’s commitment, as outlined in its sustainability policy (UTS 169), to actively reduce carbon emissions throughout the System.

These efforts and policies demonstrate UT’s commitment to a cleaner, lower carbon future. They are important, and we commend System and University leadership for embracing and encouraging them. But they are being undermined, if not negated several times over, by the methane emissions on UL land.

We embrace the claim that “**What Starts Here Changes the World**” and work every day to ensure that the classes we teach and the research we conduct live up to this promise. Yet we believe this promise should be kept not just in our classrooms and in our labs, but on the land the UT System stewards.

** Based on the University’s Office of Sustainability 2014 Greenhouse Gas Inventory report – one of the few available inventory estimates – the climate impact of the UT-Austin campus is approximately 262,000 metric tons of CO2-equivalent (MT CO2e) per year.*

University of Texas at Arlington
Ashish Basu, PhD
Professor, Department Chair, Earth and Environmental Sciences
Kaushik De, PhD
Professor, Physics
Jubilee Dickson
Graduate Teaching Assistant, Psychology
Joyce S. Goldberg, PhD
Professor, History
George N. Green, PhD
Professor Emeritus, History
Timothy Henry, DDS
Lecturer, Biology
Daniel Levine, PhD
Distinguished Teaching Professor, Psychology
Kenneth Roemer, PhD
Distinguished Teaching Professor, English
Melanie Sattler, PhD, PE
Dr. Syed Qasim Endowed Professor, Civil Engineering
Cornelia Winguth, PhD
Adjunct Assistant Professor, Earth and Environmental Sciences
Arne Winguth, PhD
Associate Professor, Earth and Environmental Sciences
Robert Young, PhD
Professor, Sociology

University of Texas at Austin
C.J. Alvarez, PhD
Assistant Professor, Mexican American and Latina/o Studies
Minou Arjomand, PhD
Assistant Professor, English
David Armstrong, PhD
Emeritus Professor, English
Phillip Barrish, PhD
Tony Hilfer Professor of American and British Literature, English
Chad Bennett, PhD
Assistant Professor, English
Mary Blockley, PhD
Professor, English Language and Literature
Brian Bremen, PhD
Associate Professor, English
Jason Brownlee, PhD
Professor, Government
Kristen Brustad, PhD
Associate Professor, Middle Eastern Studies
Erika Bsumek, PhD
Associate Professor, History
Jerome Bump, PhD
Professor, English
Lynn Campbell, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dell Medical School
Craig Campbell, PhD
Associate Professor, Anthropology
Evan Carton, PhD
Joan Negley Kelleher Centennial Professor, English
Judith G Coffin, PhD
Associate Professor, History
Matt Cohen, PhD
Associate Professor, English
Renita Coleman, PhD
Associate Professor, Journalism
Jason Cons, PhD
Assistant Professor, Anthropology
Kerry H. Cook, PhD
Professor, Geological Sciences
James Cox, PhD
Professor, English
Brent Crosson, PhD
Assistant Professor, Religious Studies
Elizabeth Cullingford, PhD
Professor, Department Chair, English
Ann Cvetkovich, PhD
Professor, English

Lina Del Castillo, PhD
Assistant Professor, Latin American Studies
Adriana Dingman
Senior Administrative Associate, Anthropology
Katherine Dodson, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dell Medical School
Marilyn Doyle, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dell Medical School
Jennifer Duc, DO
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dell Medical School
Catherine H. Echols, PhD
Associate Professor Psychology
Mesia Ezekiel, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics Dell Medical School
Linda Ferreira-Buckley, PhD
Associate Professor, English, Rhetoric and Writing
John Fiege, MFA
Lecturer, Radio, Television, and Film
Marion Forbes, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dell Medical School
Meghan Forbes, PhD
Lecturer, Slavic and Eurasian Studies
Alan Friedman, PhD
Thaman Professor of English and Comparative Literature, English
Laura Furman
Emeritus Professor, English
Jorge Ganem, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dell Medical School
Zulfikar Ghose
Emeritus Professor, English
Andrea Golden
Administrative Associate, Faculty Coordinator, English
John Moran Gonzalez, PhD
Associate Professor, English
Julie Hardwick, PhD
Professor, History
Elizabeth Hedrick, PhD
Associate Professor, English
Geraldine Heng, PhD
Associate Professor, English
Jeanette Herman, PhD
Assistant Dean for Academic Initiatives, Undergraduate Studies
Heather Houser, PhD
Associate Professor, English
Don Howard, MA
Associate Professor and UT3D Director, Radio, Television, and Film
Madeline Y. Hsu, PhD
Professor, History, Asian American Studies
Jennifer Hughes, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dell Medical School
Robert Jensen, PhD
Professor, Journalism
Jenica Jones
Executive Assistant, Slavic and Eurasian Studies
Bernadeta Kaminska, MA
Lecturer Slavic and Eurasian Studies
Kara Kockelman, PhD
E.P Schoch Professor in Engineering, Civil, Architectural, and Environmental Engineering
Tamara Kowalski
Communications Coordinator, Slavic and Eurasian Studies
Alan Kuperman, PhD
Associate Professor of Public Affairs, LBJ School
Philippa Levine, Dphil
Mary Helen Thompson Centennial Professor in Humanities, Co-Director, British Studies
Robert Lewis, PhD
Assistant Professor, Advertising, Public Relations
Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach, PhD
Professor, Department Chair, Geography and the Environment

Allen MacDuffie, PhD
Associate Professor, English
Carol MacKay, PhD
Professor, English
Tracie Matysik, PhD
Associate Professor, History
Thomas O McGarity
Professor, Chair in Administrative Law, U.T. School of Law
Julia L. Mickenberg, PhD
Associate Professor, American Studies
Beth Miller, MD MACP
Assistant Professor, Dell Medical School
George Miner, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dell Medical School
Julie Avril Minich, PhD
Assistant Professor, English, Mexican American and Latina/o Studies
Lisa L. Moore, PhD
Archibald A. Hill Professor in American and English Literature, English
Gretchen Murphy, PhD
Professor, English
Joan Neuberger, PhD
Professor, History
Martha G. Newman, PhD
Associate Professor, History, Religious Studies
Jeannette Okur, PhD
Lecturer Middle Eastern Studies
Adam Rabinowitz, PhD
Associate Professor, Classics
Megan Raby, PhD
Assistant Professor, History
Wayne A. Rebhorn, PhD
Celanese Centennial Professor, English
Elizabeth M. Richmond-Garza, PhD
UT Regents’ and Distinguished Teaching Associate Professor, English
Arlene Rosen, PhD
Professor, Anthropology
Megan Seaholm, PhD
Senior Lecturer, History
Chad Seales, PhD
Associate Professor, Religious Studies
Agnes Sekowski
Assistant Director, Graduate Coordinator, East European and Eurasian Studies
Cassandra Shulter
Graduate Program Coordinator, English
Khoa Tran
Administrative Associate, English
John Traphagan, PhD
Professor, Religious Studies
Ann Twinam, PhD
Professor, History
Robert G. Twombly, PhD
Emeritus, English
Warwick Wadlington
Joan Negley Kelleher Professor Emeritus, English
Juliet E.K. Walker, PhD
Professor, History
Peter Ward, PhD
Professor, LBJ School
David A. Wevill, MA
Emeritus Professor, English
Stephen White, PhD
Professor Classics
Donald Williams, MD
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Dell Medical School
Hannah Chapelle Wojciehowski, PhD
Professor, English
Marjorie Woods, PhD
Professor, English
Jacqueline Woolley, PhD
Professor, Department Chair, Psychology

Liang Yang, PhD
Professor, Geological Sciences
University of Texas at Dallas
Barbara Baker, PhD
Senior Lecturer, Communications
Charles Bambach
Professor, Philosophy
Matt Brown, PhD
Associate Professor, Philosophy
Eddie Healy, MM
Lecturer I, Music
Blake Kimzey, MFA
Lecturer, Fine Arts
Peter Park, PhD
Associate Professor, Historical Studies
René Prieto, PhD
Chair of Arts and Humanities, Professor, Arts and Humanities
Clay Reynolds, PhD
Director of Creative Writing, Professor, Arts
Shilyh Warren, PhD
Assistant Professor, Film and Aesthetic Studies

University of Texas at El Paso
Laurence Gibson
Retired Associate Professor, Music

University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
Faith Strunk, PhD, RUN, FNP-BC
Assistant Professor, Health School of Nursing

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Alyssa Cavasos, PhD
Assistant Professor, English
Jeff McQuillen, PhD
Associate Professor, Graduate Coordinator, Communication
Mark Noe, PhD
Associate Professor, Graduate Coordinator, English

University of Texas at San Antonio
Ward Albro
Lecturer II, Political Science and Geography
Armando Araiza, MA
Lecturer III, Architecture
Rahman Azari, PhD
Assistant Professor, Graduate Advisor of Record, Architecture
Nazgol Baghari, PhD
Assistant Professor, Director of Critical GIS Research Lab, Political Science and Geography
Brian Davies, PhD
Professor, History
Terri L. Earnest, PhD
Senior Lecturer, Graduate Advisor of Record, Sociology
Christopher Ellison, PhD
Dean’s Distinguished Professor, Sociology
Matthias Hofferberth, PhD
Assistant Professor, Political Science and Geography
Ritu Mathur, PhD
Assistant Professor, Political Science and Geography
David Matiella
Lecturer I, Architecture
Terri J. Matiella, PhD
Senior Lecturer, College of Sciences
Lindsay Ratcliffe
Lecturer III, Writing Program
Paul Romanowich, PhD
Assistant Professor, Psychology
Christopher Wickham, PhD
Professor, Modern Languages and Literatures
Walter Wilson, PhD
Associate Professor, Political Science and Geography