

JOAQUIN CASTRO
20TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT
COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4320

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1221 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TEL: (202) 225-3236
FAX: (202) 225-1915

DISTRICT OFFICE:
727 E. CESAR E. CHAVEZ BOULEVARD
SUITE B-128
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78206
TEL: (210) 348-8216
FAX: (210) 979-0737

February 14, 2018

William H. McRaven
Chancellor
The University of Texas System
210 West 7th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Chancellor McRaven:

I urge The University of Texas System (UT System) to form a task force to curtail the release of climate-changing methane pollution from oil and gas operations on University Lands. A task force is necessary to collect accurate emissions data, research leading methane mitigation practices, and formulate rules and regulations that will dramatically reduce methane emissions from University Lands over the next five years.

As you know, methane is a potent greenhouse gas – with an eighty times greater impact on climate change than carbon dioxide – that is released intentionally and unintentionally during the oil and gas development process. While methane is released into the atmosphere both naturally and through human activity, a new National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) study suggests oil and gas activity is the leading cause of increased atmospheric methane.

The private sector has increasingly taken steps to reduce methane emissions. Last November, ExxonMobil and seven other oil and gas companies collectively committed to creating methane-control programs across their operations to ensure a reduction in methane emissions. The actions of these companies indicate that sensible methane-control rules on University Lands are economically realistic and would not threaten the profitability of the Permanent University Fund.

I am aware that UT System faculty and students have made similar requests for action on this issue, and I trust that you will respond appropriately. I also want to extend my appreciation for your service to the UT System and the state of Texas.

Sincerely,


Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress

*Admiral –
Thank you for everything
you've done for our
nation.*



Cc: Sara Martinez Tucker, Chairman of the Board of Regents
Barry McBee, Vice Chancellor for Governmental Relations