



March 8, 2017

The Honorable Lamar S. Smith
Chairman
House Committee on Science, Space
and Technology
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith:

The American Exploration & Production Council ("AXPC") and the Independent Petroleum Association of America strongly support the enactment of both the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act and the Honest and Open New EPA Science Treatment Act and are most grateful to you and your committee for your efforts in respect of the important objectives set forth in each of these pieces of proposed legislation.

AXPC is a national trade association representing 33 of America's largest and most active independent natural gas and crude oil exploration and production companies, each with considerable experience drilling, operating, and producing oil and natural gas on federal lands. AXPC members are "independent" in that their operations are limited to exploration for and production of oil and natural gas. Moreover, its members operate autonomously, unlike their fully integrated counterparts, which operate in additional segments of the energy business, such as downstream refining and marketing. AXPC members are leaders in developing and applying innovative and advanced technologies necessary to explore for and produce oil and natural gas, both offshore and onshore, from non-conventional sources.

IPAA represents the thousands of independent oil and natural gas explorers and producers, as well as the service and supply industries that support their efforts, that will most directly be impacted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) policy decisions to regulate methane directly from the oil and natural gas sector. Independent producers develop about 95 percent of American oil and natural gas wells, produce 54 percent of American oil, and produce 85 percent of American natural gas. Historically, independent producers have invested over 150 percent of their cash flow back into American oil and natural gas development to find and produce more American energy. IPAA is dedicated to ensuring a strong, viable American oil and natural gas industry,

recognizing that an adequate and secure supply of energy is essential to the national economy.

The EPA's Science Advisory Board is a critical link in the EPA's policy making process and must, therefore, be unbiased and motivated only to seek the best possible policy result based on the best possible, publicly available, verifiable data. Moreover, open, public debate must be encouraged, not discouraged. The goal must be to get the best possible result, which is why the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act should be enacted.

Science used to support or as a basis for regulations or other policies should be based on publicly available scientific and technical data so as to allow for and even encourage independent fact finding and analysis. Transparency is critical to this process. The Honest and Open New EPA Science Treatment Act would accomplish this result.

AXPC and IPAA urge passage of both of these critical pieces of legislation and stand ready to assist in any way you believe we might be able to add value to this process.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, AXPC (Bruce Thompson) can be reached via email at bthompson@axpc.us or by phone at 202-347-7529 and IPAA (Lee Fuller) can be reached via email at lfuller@ipaa.org or by phone at 202-857-4722. Thank you for your good work on these and other issues.

Very truly yours,



V. Bruce Thompson
President, AXPC



Lee O. Fuller
Executive Vice President, IPAA

cc: Members of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology