

BERNALILLO COUNTY

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTION NO. 2016-81

**A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING THE NEED FOR FEDERAL
RULE CHANGES TO REDUCE METHANE WASTE IN OIL AND GAS PRODUCTION.**

WHEREAS, energy development is critically important to the economy of both
Bernalillo County and the State of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Mexico is the nation's leading producer of oil, and the
second leading producer of natural gas, on federal lands; and

WHEREAS, oil and gas revenue is the cornerstone of New Mexico's educational funding
and the state is facing a multimillion-dollar budget shortfall; and

WHEREAS, the United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has the authority
and duty to ensure a fair return for publicly-owned oil and gas resources under the Mineral
Leasing Act of 1920; and

WHEREAS, a 2013 report by ICF International found that a significant amount of
natural gas worth as much as \$330 million was lost through leaks, flaring and venting on federal
and tribal lands, enough natural gas to provide energy for 1.5 million homes for one year; and

WHEREAS, a recent National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) study
discovered a very large and highly concentrated methane plume above the Four Corners region
where much of New Mexico's natural gas production occurs; and

WHEREAS, BLM does not charge royalties or charges reduced royalty rates on methane
the primary component of natural gas - that is leaked, flared or vented; and

WHEREAS, according to Senate Memorial 29 introduced by Senator Benny Shendo Jr.
during New Mexico's 52nd Legislature, nearly 45 percent of all BLM applications to flare royalty
free come from New Mexico; and

1 **WHEREAS**, data suggests that since 2010, New Mexico has lost \$50 million in royalties
2 due to wasted methane emissions; and

3 **WHEREAS**, BLM is proposing new rules entitled "Venting and Flaring: Waste
4 Prevention and Use of Produced Oil and Gas for Beneficial Purposes" that would modernize how
5 the government accounts for methane waste on public and tribal lands; and

6 **WHEREAS**, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed
7 new rules and guidance for the oil and gas industry under the Federal Clean Air Act to help
8 combat climate change and reduce air pollution that harms public health; and

9 **WHEREAS**, according to Senate Memorial 29, estimates suggest that as much as ninety
10 percent (90%) of the natural gas being wasted through flaring could be captured or put to use;
11 and

12 **WHEREAS**, the state of Colorado saw a marked increase in natural gas production and
13 job creation after adopting state rules to cut methane waste, with some companies addressing the
14 issue prior to rules being adopted by the state; and

15 **WHEREAS**, reducing methane waste would bring critical public health benefits to our
16 communities located near oil and gas extraction and processing sites, by simultaneously cutting
17 ground-level ozone forming gases and cancer causing pollutants such as benzene and other
18 volatile organic compounds; and

19 **WHEREAS**, it is estimated that the proposed BLM methane rule would generate \$6.7M
20 to \$8.1M in royalties for New Mexico – additional revenue critical to helping address education
21 needs statewide; and


1 WHEREAS, efforts to eliminate methane emissions would create high-quality jobs,
2 economic development in the domestic oil and gas manufacturing and service sectors, and
3 provide much needed royalty revenue to the state to invest in areas of greatest need; and

4 NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of County Commissioners, the
5 governing body of the County of Bernalillo, fully supports stronger EPA and BLM methane
6 rules to reduce wasteful natural gas venting, flaring and leakage from oil and gas operations
7 occurring on private, federal and tribal lands and thereby protecting the health, welfare and
8 potential revenue rightfully due to the citizens of New Mexico.


9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bernalillo County Commission fully supports
10 charging royalties for wasted, vented or flared methane gas that could otherwise be captured and
11 taken out of the atmosphere.


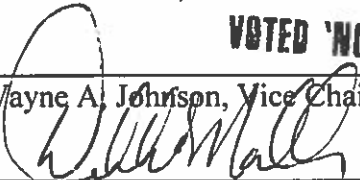

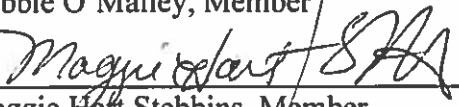

12 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be distributed to members
13 of the New Mexico Congressional Delegation, and relevant units of the U.S. Department of the
14 Interior including, the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the
15 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

16 DONE this day 25th day of October, 2016.

17 APPROVED AS TO FORM
18 
19 W. Ken Martinez, County Attorney



25 ATTEST:
26 
27 Maggie Toulouse Oliver, County Clerk
28

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Art De La Cruz, Chair
VOTED 'NO'

Wayne A. Johnson, Vice Chair

Debbie O'Malley, Member

Maggie Hart Stebbins, Member
EXCUSED

Lonnie C. Talbert, Member