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NEW ENERGY VISION REPORT OFFERS FIRST DATA-DRIVEN, COST-EFFECTIVE ROADMAP FOR CUTTING U.S. METHANE EMISSIONS 30% BY 2030

[New York, NY – May 13] The non-profit Energy Vision today published its report, "Meeting the Methane Challenge: How the U.S. Can Reach Its 2030 Goal." The title refers to the Global Methane Pledge, which commits the U.S. and 154 other signatories to the goal of cutting methane emissions at least 30% by 2030 (or "30x30" for short) to keep global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius and prevent the worst effects of "runaway" climate change. Methane is 87 times more potent as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide over 20 years, and it has already caused a third of modern global warming.

On May 7, EPA's New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) for oil and gas production took effect, tightening methane regulations across millions of pieces of equipment. Energy Vision's report assesses NSPS and a range of other current and potential measures to cut methane emissions in the U.S. oil and gas sector, such as plugging abandoned oil and gas wells and "stripper wells," which produce very little oil and gas but collectively have high methane emissions. Of these various oil and gas measures, NSPS has the greatest potential impact, the report finds. According Energy Vision's analysis, if fully implemented by 2029, the NSPS would cut U.S. methane emissions by 17.5%.

But that is little more than halfway to the 30x30 goal. The report lays out a data-driven roadmap for a complementary strategy which could go the rest of the way to meeting or exceeding 30x30 cost-effectively, and which deserves more attention: anaerobic digestion of organic waste.

Food waste and agricultural manure release methane biogases as they decompose, but instead of escaping into the atmosphere, these biogases can be captured in sealed tanks called anaerobic digesters (ADs) and converted to renewable energy.

Building more ADs is a practical, cost-effective path to cutting U.S. methane emissions by another 13.6% by 2030 while producing renewable energy, the report finds. Methane biogases captured in ADs can be used to generate local power and heat, for example to run dairy operations. Or they can be refined into renewable natural gas (RNG), the lowest-carbon fuel available today. RNG fuel is especially beneficial when used in applications which can't readily be electrified: older homes and buildings, heavy industries, and heavy-duty trucks and buses.

RNG is chemically similar to fossil natural gas and can be used in all the same ways. But unlike fossil gas, RNG made in ADs involves no fracking or other leaky extraction, and has drastically lower carbon emissions. In fact, when made from food scraps or manure, it is "net carbon-

negative" on a lifecycle basis. This means more greenhouse gas emissions are captured during fuel production than are emitted when the fuel is burned – a big net gain for the climate.

Energy Vision's report finds that the "biggest bang for the buck" in organic waste methane abatement is keeping food waste out of landfills and processing it in ADs. Landfills are major methane emitters, and food waste accounts for most of those emissions. Half of all food currently discarded as waste is edible and should be redistributed. But the other, inedible half is an ideal feedstock for ADs. The second biggest "bang" is processing farm manure in ADs, which lowers agricultural methane emissions and provides crucial extra income for medium-sized farms.

According to Energy Vision's analysis, building some 700 new ADs to process municipal and industrial food waste as well as about 4,000 new ADs to process dairy and swine manure would cut U.S. methane 13.6%. The total capital cost of the 4,700 digesters would be about $74 billion, some of which available in tax credits and other financing under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). New digesters take two to six years per project to build and could be operational by 2030.

"The numbers speak for themselves," said Michael Lerner, Energy Vision's director of research and publications. "ADs are low-hanging fruit that haven't received the attention they deserve, and that needs to change. While stopping methane leaks from oil and gas operations – a major focus of government – is cheaper and could get us about halfway to the 30x30 goal, the resistance of oil and gas producers threatens to slow progress on that front. The oil and gas industry needs to support the essential transition to the sustainable future the planet needs. Meanwhile, ADs are the missing piece that can get us the rest of the way to 30x30. They are a fully commercial technology and they're scaling fast, from 60 operational facilities in the U.S. in 2017 to over 300 today. With the incentives provided in the IRA, their growth can be supercharged."

"Energy Vision's report will be a very useful publication," said Durwood Zaelke, founder and president of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development. "Methane is the blowtorch that is pushing the climate from global warming to global boiling. We need to turn this blowtorch off immediately to have the best chance to keep the planet safe."

"Bold action on methane emissions is a necessity now," said Matthew Tomich, the president of Energy Vision. "As this report shows, there is a way for the U.S. to meet its Global Methane Pledge goals by 2030, and show the rest of the world it can be done. With NSPS we now have a credible pathway to cutting methane emissions from the oil and gas sector, but we still need comparable ways to cut methane from landfills and agriculture. We've crunched the numbers and found anaerobic digestion is the most impactful and cost-effective option. That finding can help the U.S. exert global leadership in slashing methane emissions across more sectors. That will enable the U.S. and other countries to reach the 30x30 goal and bend the curve on climate change."

NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: The full report is posted here. Sources quoted in this release and other experts are available for comment and interviews. To arrange one, or for more information, please contact Stephen Kent, skent@kentcom.com, 914-589-5988.