

Dear state legislators,

As students in Colorado, we may not be able to vote. But we will not remain quiet when matters that affect us come up at the state Capitol. **We are writing to you today with a unified voice to ask you to support House Bill 1352 because Colorado students and teachers deserve a true 1,000-foot buffer from oil and gas wells.**

Currently, Colorado's laws require oil and gas activity to be 1,000 feet away from school *buildings*. But there is no legal limit to how far this heavy industrial activity should be from school playgrounds, outdoor lunch areas, modular classrooms, or athletic fields. We are asking you to clarify the law and make this commonsense adjustment in order to protect us — and future students — from the impacts of oil and gas.

What are the impacts of having oil and gas activity near schools?

Between 2006 and 2015, a total of 116 fires and explosions in Colorado were reported at oil and gas operations – roughly one fire or explosion every month.¹ A fire or explosion near a school could have dire consequences. Just last year, a football game in Greeley, Colorado, was evacuated due to a nearby well's valve failure. In Frederick, Colorado, an oil storage tank fire 1,800 feet from Legacy Elementary School required students and teachers to shelter in place. And we know the effects of oil and gas accidents are not restricted to 1,000 feet. A recent well blowout in Hudson, Colorado sprayed a mist of oil, gas, and drilling waste water over an area 2,000 feet long by 1,000 feet wide.

But fires and explosions aren't the only threat to students like us. Oil and gas activity releases pollutants into the air that are harmful to our health. Students — especially young children, who are far more vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution than adults — should not have to attend school in industrial zones. As the state continues to learn about the exact impact that oil and gas drilling has on our health, they shouldn't allow students like us to be so exposed to harmful toxins, and should give us the buffer zone required for every other industrial activity. There are already 59 schools in Colorado that are either close to oil and gas operations or have the potential for oil and gas development within 1,000 feet of the school property. That means thousands of us are already at risk when we go to school.

Whether we're playing in sandboxes, eating lunch at picnic tables, or training to become all-star athletes — we shouldn't have to worry about fires, explosions, and air pollution. We shouldn't have to fear for our health, safety, and well-being while we're supposed to be focused on learning.

¹ Blair, Benjamin D., et al. "Is reporting "significant damage" transparent? Assessing fire and explosion risk at oil and gas operations in the United States." *Energy Research & Social Science* 29 (2017): 36-43.

We call on all Colorado legislators to vote yes on House Bill 1352 to stand up for us, the students of Colorado.

Signed,

Franchesca Ruehrwein - Parent at Arvada West
Rich Norris - Parent at Jeffco Schools
Erin Ressel - Parent at Jeffco Schools
Tony Diego - Parent at Edgewater Elementary
Andrea Syko - Parent at Emory Elementary
Brenna Anders - Student at Horizon High School, Thornton CO
Cian Mitchell - Student at West Gate Community School
Kendra Hamblin - Teacher at Erie Middle School
Victoria Small - Teacher at Mountain Vista Community School
Alissa Minatta - Teacher at Mountain Phoenix Community School
Cristian Lora- Thornton High School
Jessica Espinoza- Journey Through Our Heritage
Kynell Perry- Journey Through Our Heritage
Malik Turner- Journey Through Our Heritage
Tara Majuk- Journey Through Our Heritage
Andres Martinez - Teacher Journey Through Our Heritage
Moses Izeta - Journey Through Our Heritage
Esmeralda Aguilar- Journey Through Our Heritage
Alondra Ibarra Martinez - Kimble- Journey Through Our Heritage
Cittali Solis- Alameda International - Journey Through Our Heritage
Saeed Dahmen- Journey Through Our Heritage
Marina Apodaca-. - Journey Through Our Heritage
Torrie Carter- Journey Through Our Heritage
Dot Mivera- Journey Through Our Heritage
Virginia Dorazo- Teacher- Journey Through Our Heritage
Linda Solmank- Teacher- Journey Through Our Heritage
Kaylene Barriento- Hinkly High School- Journey Through Our Heritage
Stacey Garay- Journey Through Our Heritage
Elena Santos- Journey Through Our Heritage
Cora Martinez- Journey Through Our Heritage
Mark Sherman- Dakota Ridge High School- Journey Through Our Heritage
Dana Chavez- Journey Through Our Heritage
Asmok Gdwancy- Journey Through Our Heritage
Ken Madot- Journey Through Our Heritage
Ashoya Edwang- Journey Through Our Heritage
Gema Hernandez- Journey Through Our Heritage
Angel Rocha- Journey Through Our Heritage
Makuei Majok- Journey Through Our Heritage

Tiffany Stewart- Journey Through Our Heritage
Charles Deherrera- Journey Through Our Heritage
Isomad Gonzalez- Journey Through Our Heritage
Jocelyn Dominguez- New America High School - Journey Through Our Heritage
Craig Williams- Journey Through Our Heritage
CiXochitl Dela Torre- Journey Through Our Heritage
Cuauhtli Soli- Journey Through Our Heritage
Karen Castillo- Journey Through Our Heritage
Griselda Reyes- Journey Through Our Heritage
Sonia Del Real- Journey Through Our Heritage
Arianna Montoya- Journey Through Our Heritage
Carlos Acosta- New America High School - Journey Through Our Heritage
Zoey Frantz- Rose Stine Elementary- Journey Through Our Heritage
Felicia Frantz- Alameda International- Journey Through Our Heritage
Dominic Baca- MSU Denver- Journey Through Our Heritage
Joselyn Campo- Abraham Lincoln High School- Journey Through Our Heritage
Lupita Ortega- Abraham Lincoln High School- Journey Through Our Heritage
Amelea Montoya- Journey Through Our Heritage