

July 25, 2019

Dear Presidential Candidates,

Thank you for stating the importance of climate change and good health care coverage at the Democratic Party Presidential debate. As Coloradans who are living amidst the fracking fields of Colorado, we feel compelled to correct former Governor Hickenlooper's egregious mischaracterization of the issue and invite you to come see firsthand the disastrous impacts of fracking in our communities. It's wrecking the climate and it's causing widespread public health harms including respiratory illnesses, premature births, and increased risk of cancer.

Governor Hickenlooper referred to methane controls in Colorado, and by extension fracking and natural gas, as a climate solution. This is wrong. Science is clear that the cumulative greenhouse gas implications of fracking, including drilling, necessary infrastructure such as pipelines and compressor stations, and the ultimate combustion of natural gas make it disastrous for the climate. It is as bad, or possibly worse, as coal, given the extremely high potency of methane released throughout the process. The methane controls the governor referred to are equivalent to putting filters on cigarettes. Yes, they help a little, but they won't stop us from climate catastrophe, or from getting cancer.

The public health harms from drilling and fracking are significant, unacceptable, and contradict the most important part of health care: prevention. The process relies on hundreds of chemicals, many of them toxic and carcinogens, that pollute our air, our water, and our communities. The science on this is not in question. The vast majority of over 1,700 studies find serious risks and harms to public health and the environment.⁽¹⁾ When Governor Hickenlooper says he is a scientist, understand that he was a petroleum geologist and he has bragged about drinking a glass of fracking fluid.

We invite you to come to our state and our communities to meet those of us harmed by fracking, see the impacts on our lives, and to recognize the science demonstrating that it is disastrous for the climate and cannot be part of any serious climate plans.

Sincerely,

350 Colorado Action
Be The Change
Colorado Rising
Food & Water Action
Front Range Residents for Environment, Safety and Health
Lookout Alliance
North Range Concerned Citizens
Weld Air and Water