Touts Industry’s Record of Reducing Methane Emissions from Natural Gas Operations

WASHINGTON, July 10, 2017 – API today reiterated its support for cost-effective regulation that target emissions of volatile organic compounds – which provide the co-benefit of methane emissions reductions – from natural gas operations. API comments came at an EPA hearing on its New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) rule where EPA received testimony on extending compliance deadlines to allow EPA to revisit the NSPS regulations finalized in 2016.

“Methane emissions from the natural gas industry have fallen 18.6 percent even as production increased by 50 percent between 1990 and 2015. This is a tribute to the industry’s ongoing commitment to technological innovation and our strong incentive to capture more of what we sell,” said API Senior Director for Regulatory and Scientific Affairs Howard J. Feldman, who delivered testimony this morning.

EPA’s 2012 NSPS rule provided a roadmap for effectively reducing emissions from natural gas and oil operations, including methane. In fact, methane emissions from hydraulically-fractured natural gas wells have fallen nearly 79 percent since 2005, and the increased use of natural gas to fuel the power sector has played a significant role in reaching today’s near 30-year lows in carbon dioxide emissions. As methane is the primary constituent of natural gas, industry is currently incentivized to reduce those emissions.

“As demonstrated through previous regulatory efforts, EPA’s focus must be on cost-effective regulations that target emissions of volatile organic compounds, providing the co-benefit of methane emission reductions,” said Feldman. “The industry has led the way in pursuing new technologies and game-changing energy research that will fuel innovation for years to come. With these investments, the oil and natural gas industry is supplying the energy our economy needs, while advancing America’s technological competitiveness,
energy our economy needs, while advancing America's technological competiveness, lowering carbon emissions and creating jobs.

“We will continue to work with EPA, other federal agencies and Congress to promote a future with a smarter regulatory approach based on science-based solutions. Collaboration can build on industry success without sacrificing jobs or jeopardizing economic, environmental and energy security benefits.”

API submitted a detailed petition for administrative reconsideration of the final rule to Administrator McCarthy in August 2016.

API is the only national trade association representing all facets of the oil and natural gas industry, which supports 9.8 million U.S. jobs and 8 percent of the U.S. economy. API’s more than 625 members include large integrated companies, as well as exploration and production, refining, marketing, pipeline, and marine businesses, and service and supply firms. Our members provide most of the nation’s energy and are backed by a growing grassroots movement of more than 40 million Americans.