DENVER, February 1, 2018 – The Colorado Petroleum Council testified today before the House Committee on Health, Insurance and Environment in opposition to House Bill 18-1071, legislation that would slow energy development in Colorado and decrease revenue to the government.

“This bill is an attempt to circumvent the judicial system and eliminates the checks and balances system that is the foundation of the state’s democracy,” said Tracee Bentley, executive director of the Colorado Petroleum Council. “The bill would have undeniable and significant financial impacts that are not reflected in the current fiscal note. Completely rewriting the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission’s mission at the request of out-of-state, keep-it-in-the-ground activists would turn every permitting decision into a forum for protracted litigation, costing the state millions in direct dollars to defend administrative and judicial appeals, and tens of millions more in lost tax and royalty revenues due to permitting delays.”

The bill, HB18-1071, erroneously states that the Court of Appeals decided “that oil and gas development is not balanced with the protection of public health, safety and welfare.” The 2-1 decision reached by the Court of Appeals is based on the premise that the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) misinterpreted their statutory authority when rejecting a rulemaking petition that sought an indefinite moratorium on oil and gas activities in the state. The decision clearly states it “does not address the merits of whether the commission should adopt the petitioners’ proposed rule.” The decision is currently being appealed to the Colorado Supreme Court, an appeal that was unanimously approved by the COGCC, which is represented by the Colorado Attorney General. The Colorado Supreme Court accepted the appeal on Monday, January 29, 2018.

“The underlying premise behind the petitioner’s request for rulemaking is ultimately to persuade the COGCC to ban oil and gas development in Colorado, a result plainly contradicted by state law and policy, we hope members of the Colorado House of Representatives will see this for what it truly is and vote it down,” said Bentley. “The state’s natural gas and oil industry remains
committed to working with all stakeholders as we continue to responsibly deliver the energy that runs Colorado, and our country, with the highest standards and practices of safety possible."

The Colorado Petroleum Council is a division of API, which represents all segments of America’s oil and natural gas industry. Its more than 625 members produce, process, and distribute most of the nation’s energy. The industry supports 10.3 million U.S. jobs and is backed by a growing grassroots movement of more than 40 million Americans.