

For Immediate Release: June 22, 2021

CONTACTS:

Angel Amaya, Western Organization of Resource Councils, Communications Director; (361) 779-2572, aamaya@worc.org

Press Statement
**Crucial Legislation Introduced to Address
Orphaned Oil & Gas Wells**

New Bill Tackles Crisis with Stronger Bonding and Funds for Reclamation

Billings, MT -- Today, U.S. Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO) introduced legislation to address the pressing issue of orphaned oil and gas wells. His [Oil and Gas Bonding Reform and Orphaned Well Remediation Act](#) would strengthen bonding requirements and provide states and BLM with funding to reclaim orphaned wells -- ensuring this crisis is fixed in the short term while reforming the federal bonding system so that our communities do not face a similar crisis in the future. Additionally, Bennet's Public Engagement Opportunity on [Public Land Exploration \(PEOPLE\) Act of 2021](#) creates new standards to ensure robust public participation in land management decisions.

In response to the bill introduction, Barbara Vasquez a member of the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) from Cowdrey, Colorado, said:

"Senator Bennet's bills introduced today are welcomed by rural Westerners who live near oil and gas drilling. For almost a century, lax rules have allowed companies to leave behind leaking and destructive orphaned wells on public and private lands. A nationwide cleanup plan will protect farmlands, create jobs, and prevent continued pollution. These bills also give local residents in the oil patch a stronger voice in when and how development proceeds and ensure corporations will clean up after themselves, creating thousands of well-paying jobs in the process."

###

The Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) is a network of grassroots organizations that span seven of the Western states with more than 19,000 members. Headquartered in Billings, Montana, WORC also has offices in Colorado and Washington, D.C.