

Additional Statements of Support:

“The practice of stripping the land of its resources and allowing bad actors to walk away from drill sites must stop. Our hardworking families should not pay for one dollar to restore the land due to irresponsible bad actors in the industry,” **said Lynn Baca, Commissioner of Adams County.**

“As a grass roots organization that has been working on improving Oil and Gas regulations for 40 years, we support the proposed legislation that will hold the extraction industry to the same standards as other businesses - clean up your own mess. Our community has been on the front line of oil and gas extraction for decades, many of us with wells in our backyards and ranches. We have experienced first-hand the impacts to our health and water sources when the industry is not held to reasonable bonding or basic plugging and remediation standards. Senator Bennet's proposed legislation will help protect communities and make long-overdue reforms to stop the orphan well crisis from growing,” **said Ryan Huggins, Executive Director, San Juan Citizens Alliance.**

“Communities shouldn't have to clean up a mess left by oil and gas companies on public lands. Senator Bennet's bill would not only work to clean up the nation's toxic orphan well crisis but also ensure that oil and gas companies, not taxpayers, are responsible for future clean-ups. Thank you, Senator Bennet, for prioritizing cleaner, safer public lands that communities across the nation, as well as future generations, will enjoy and inherit,” **said Jim Ramey, Colorado State Director at The Wilderness Society.**

“There are hundreds of orphaned wells across western Colorado, left by a legacy of oil and gas extraction and boom and bust economic cycles. The taxpayers of Colorado should not be left with the clean up costs for industry that made a quick profit off of public resources. Like any responsible business, the oil and gas industry should be held responsible for the cost of doing business on our public lands. We thank Sen. Bennet for his continued leadership on this issue and ensuring the responsible management of public lands and taxpayer dollars,” **said Barbara Vasques, Board member of Western Colorado Alliance**

“Wilderness Workshop commends Senator Bennet for introducing legislation that targets the staggering number of abandoned wells impacting Colorado's public lands and communities. These common-sense measures will make sure that those who profit from oil and gas extraction can no longer walk away from the responsibility to clean up and reclaim their production sites. By shutting down inactive wells, blocking non-compliant lease transfers, and forcing operators to provide honest financial assurances upfront, this bill finally closes loopholes that have been abused for decades. These measures will protect Colorado's public lands, secure vital funding, and safeguard our water and wildlife,” **said Will Roush, Executive Director, Wilderness Workshop.**

“Taxpayers should not be forced to pick up the tab when oil and gas companies walk away from their cleanup responsibilities. We appreciate Senator Bennet's leadership on legislation to hold operators financially accountable for cleaning up the wells they leave behind. By closing

loopholes and updating bonding requirements, the Stop Orphaned Wells Act would take commonsense steps to protect American taxpayers," **said Autumn Hanna, vice president of Taxpayers for Common Sense.**

"With more than 20 documented orphaned wells in Routt and Moffat Counties and nearly 1,000 across Colorado, these wells pose clear threats to public safety, wildlife, livestock, groundwater, and air quality. Restoring orphaned wells and modernizing federal oil and gas leasing requirements are critical to protecting our communities. The persistent lack of funding to properly plug and reclaim these wells has created unacceptable risks to public health, the environment, and local economies. Senator Bennet's legislation would bring much-needed accountability and transparency to federal oil and gas development on public lands. Taxpayers should not be left to clean up an operator's mess, nor should local governments be excluded from decisions affecting the public lands their communities rely on for economic opportunity and recreation," **said Michelle Stewart, Western Resilience Center's Executive Director.**

"All public lands users have a responsibility to leave the land better than they found it, including oil and gas developers. Sufficient bonding is an insurance policy for the public to know that regardless of the financial status of an operator, our public lands and resources will be reclaimed after oil and gas procurement, even if the well is orphaned. We thank Senator Bennet for his leadership introducing the Stop Orphan Wells Act and working to help modernize the financial assurance system for oil and gas development on public lands," **said Kaden McArthur, Trout Unlimited's Congressional Affairs Director.**

"For too long the oil and gas industry has abandoned low-producing or inactive wells to leak methane and health-harming chemicals into our air and water. As these companies leave the wells orphaned, they also shirk their responsibilities, leaving the cost and consequences of dealing with the leaking wells to the taxpayers. We are grateful for the leadership of Senator Bennet to ensure that the polluters profiting on fossil fuel extraction are cleaning up their mess," **said Mahyar Sorour, Sierra Club Beyond Fossil Fuels Policy Director.**

"Coloradans deserve economic policies that serve the public. Yet for too long, the federal oil and gas leasing program has prioritized industry interests, allowing a trillion-dollar industry to profit from publicly owned resources while passing cleanup costs on to taxpayers. Senator Bennet's bill addresses this growing problem by updating bonding requirements to reflect the full cost of reclaiming wells and protecting Coloradans from having to pay to clean up after oil and gas companies. It's a common-sense step toward managing our public lands in a fiscally responsible way," **said Chris Stiffler, Senior Economist of Colorado Fiscal Institute.**

"Oil and gas operators - not taxpayers - should pay to clean up the messes they leave behind after maximizing profits. This legislation would help end the practice of forcing Americans to foot the bill for abandoned wells that threaten public health and safety. We will continue to work with Sen. Bennet to raise the bar for corporate accountability," **said Laura Esquivel, Senior Legislative Representative, Earthjustice Action.**

"Companies that drill on public lands have a legal duty to clean up after themselves when they're done. The Stop Orphaned Wells Act would strengthen bonding and cleanup requirements and prevent companies from using the sale of aging wells to avoid their cleanup obligations. Taxpayers shouldn't be left paying for someone else's mess, and our public lands and waters shouldn't be left bearing the damage," **said Josh Axelrod, Senior Program Advocate at NRDC.**

Healthy public lands support thriving populations of wildlife, clean water, and clean air. These lands are the inheritance of all Americans. Irresponsible developers leave behind equipment that pollutes the air and water. Delayed cleanup impacts the health of animals, humans, and the land. Senator Bennet's bill is an important step to restore our lands and ensure their benefits for future generations," **said Alison Gallensky, Conservation Geographer, Rocky Mountain Wild.**

"Our public lands are an irreplaceable asset; a resource that demands careful, responsible management. Yet for too long, we've allowed bad actors in the oil and gas industry to drill on these lands and walk away, leaving behind thousands of orphaned wells that threaten our air and water. This outdated system lets companies off the hook for their pollution and cleanup costs while the public bears the risk. Senator Bennet is working to fix this crisis by making common-sense updates to the requirements for operating on our public lands, ensuring these places stay safe for people and wildlife. It's time we finally bring this system into the 21st century by passing Senator Bennet's bills," **said Russell Kuhlman, Executive Director of Nevada Wildlife Federation.**

"Across the West, public lands are central to our way of life. They provide vital wildlife habitat and the places where we hunt, fish, and spend time outdoors. But these treasured landscapes are being put at risk by policies riddled with loopholes and handouts that allow irresponsible oil and gas companies to abandon their wells and offload cleanup costs onto taxpayers. Oil and gas production has its place — but we have a responsibility to do it right. Senator Bennet's bill will begin to fix this broken system by holding companies accountable and ensuring our public lands can serve multiple uses for generations to come," **said Jesse Deubel, Executive Director, New Mexico Wildlife Federation.**

"Communities across the West are utilizing access to healthy public lands to attract both visitors and business investment. Yet sadly abandoned oil and gas wells that have not been properly plugged or remediated are a growing threat to other public land uses. Senator Bennet's bill will update regulations to update bonding rates— ensuring that funds are in place to properly clean up wells at the end of their productive lives. Without Senator Bennet's bill the cost of clean up is passed on to taxpayers. This bill will help regions who depend on oil and gas get the most from their public lands and help create resilient economies for future generations," **said Ashley Korenblat, Managing Director, Public Land Solutions.**

"Montana has a deep and complex history of extractive industries privatizing profits and social losses. They get rich while Montanans are stuck to clean up and pay for the messes. Enough is enough. If oil and gas developers are going to benefit from our shared, public resources -

especially the public lands that hunters and anglers rely on - then they need to cover the full costs of doing business here. It's as simple as that, and we thank Senator Bennet for bringing forward a common-sense and fair solution," **said Frank Szollosi, Executive Director of Montana Wildlife Federation.**