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Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter Statement in Response to ERCOT Fighting New EPA Rules

Austin, TX – Today at a [board meeting](#) of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), the operator of Texas’s independent electric grid [attacked new rules from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#) that were announced in April. Details on the four new federal rules and their impact on Texas communities are outlined in a previous Sierra Club press release, [here](#).

In response, Dave Cortez, Director of the Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter, issued the following statement:

“Since the near-total collapse of the main Texas electric grid during Winter Storm Uri in 2021, a previously little-known state agency has become an infamous household name. [ERCOT’s leadership has earned the mistrust of Texans](#) for all the ways they’ve sold out our health and safety to wealthy fossil fuel corporations, so it’s no surprise ERCOT CEO Pablo Vegas is now [defending coal plants’ ability to pollute](#).

“Texas has [four of the top 10 dirtiest coal plants](#) in the country, including [Martin Lake, which is deadlier](#) than any other coal plant in the U.S. These [new EPA rules are a lifeline for Texans](#) who are being exposed to shocking levels of mercury and other carcinogens and dying because of it.

“ERCOT leadership claims that keeping dirty coal plants running is an electric reliability issue, but in fact [coal plants can’t be counted on](#) especially in extreme weather. What Texans *can* rely on is that wealthy fossil fuel corporations will sacrifice our right to clean air and safe water in service of their bottom line, and in this case ERCOT seems happy to help the polluters line their pockets while Texans pay the ultimate price.”

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