

VERONICA ESCOBAR
16TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION,
VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE



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August 26, 2026

Brooke Paup
Chairwoman
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
12100 Park 35 Circle
Austin, TX 78753

Dear Chairwoman Paup:

I write as a follow up to my letter¹ to the EPA regarding the Marathon Petroleum emissions event on August 4–5, 2026² and the refinery's compliance with its air permit and its communication with surrounding communities and local officials.

Initial reports^{3,4} filed with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) showed that the release of pollutants was approximately 8,897.9 pounds of propylene, 862 pounds of sulfur dioxide, and 19.1 pounds of 1,3-butadiene, all exceeding permitted allowances. New reports⁵ filed with TCEQ show that emissions from Marathon Petroleum continued for three days and that pollutants emitted included 10,066 pounds of propylene and a little under 1,600 pounds of sulfur dioxide, more than the initial reports and all exceeding permitted allowances. Exposures to these gases are both an environmental and public health concern^{6,7}.

Marathon's compliance with federal requirements, its notification obligations, and the adequacy of its response to hazardous emissions remain a concern. I ask that TCEQ provide answers to the following questions as soon as possible:

¹ [Congresswoman Escobar Calls for EPA to Investigate Marathon Refinery Incident](#)

² [KTSM – El Paso News - Stout demands accountability after emissions report in South-Central El Paso refinery 'incident'](#)

³ [TCEQ Air Emission Event Report Database Incident 463231](#)

⁴ [TCEQ Air Emission Event Report Database Incident 463229](#)

⁵ [KFOX14 - Update: El Paso Marathon refinery incident released 15.4 tons of pollutants](#)

⁶ [EPA Sulfur Dioxide Basics](#)

⁷ [NCI – 1,3-Butadiene](#)

- Did Marathon violate any federal requirements, including the Clean Air Act or its Title V permit?
- When did Marathon notify TCEQ, and what information did it provide?
- Did Marathon follow its risk management plan triggered by the release of 1,3-Butadiene?
- Why did Marathon not notify local officials or the public? What corrective actions are being taken by TCEQ or Marathon Petroleum to ensure that local communities receive timely and transparent communication following incidents of unexpected emissions?
- What air monitoring was conducted during and after the incident, what pollutants were monitored, and what were the results?
- Has TCEQ independently evaluated the potential health impacts of the reported releases, particularly sulfur dioxide and 1,3-butadiene?
- What additional monitoring, investigation, or enforcement action does TCEQ believe is warranted?

El Paso residents need fast, transparent communication when dangerous pollutants threaten their community. It is crucial that TCEQ holds Marathon fully accountable for violations and implements safeguards to stop these incidents from happening again. Please ensure my office is kept in the loop on all investigation and enforcement proceedings related to the Marathon refinery.

Thank you for your swift attention to this matter, and I look forward to working together to protect El Paso and El Pasoans.

Sincerely,



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

cc: State Senator César Blanco (District 29)
State Representative Vincent Perez (District 77)
State Representative Mary González (District 75)
State Representative Claudia Ordaz (District 76)
State Representative Joe Moody (District 78)
State Representative Eddie Morales Jr. (District 74)