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## Critical Issues Forum: The Benefits and Risks of a U.S. Methane Economy

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alexandria, VA – What will the energy mix for U.S. look like in 30 years? Will natural gas fuel our cars, heat our homes, and provide most of our electricity? With the increasing successes by geoscientists and engineers at developing conventional and unconventional natural gas resources, the American Geosciences Institute is hosting its inaugural Critical Issues to examine two important questions:

1. Is a natural gas-dominant economy achievable in North America?
2. Would a natural gas dominant economy be desirable?

To seek answers to these questions, geoscientists, regulators and leaders in the energy, environmental, and economic sectors will converge in Fort Worth, Texas to discuss what may be an emerging, natural gas dominant, *Methane Economy*.

“Geoscientists have facilitated access to natural gas in the U.S. that has completely changed the dynamic of the economy. Leaders in stakeholder communities should be part of the discussion about developing these resources responsibly, efficiently and to address the concerns of the U.S. public,” said Dr. P. Patrick Leahy, AGI’s Executive Director.

The Critical Issues Forum “America’s Increasing Reliance on Natural Gas: Benefits and Risks of a Methane Economy” will be held in Fort Worth, Texas from November 19-20, 2014. Event registration is open and can be found at (<http://bit.ly/ciforum-14>).

To encourage participation from experts at AGI Member organizations, a \$25 registration discount will be applied to members of the organizations that make up the AGI federation. Students can register for a flat \$50, regardless of profession. Members of the press are encouraged to come, and should contact Meg Gilley at [mgilley@americangeosciences.org](mailto:mgilley@americangeosciences.org).

Forum sessions will address forecasts of natural gas availability and demand; environmental, health and safety issues; and the drivers and barriers to natural gas development in North America and their implications. Participants will have the opportunity to explore how decisions being made today may influence the development of a methane economy and how a natural gas dominant economy might affect the finance, transportation and infrastructure industries, state regulators, and researchers in industry and academia. A report covering the impacts discussed during this event will be released in 2015.

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The American Geosciences Institute is the global leader in geoscience information. AGI is a nonprofit federation of geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 250,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geosciences education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role geosciences play in society’s use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.

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