

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 26, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20585

Dear President Biden and Secretary Granholm,

We write to express deep concerns with the Department of Energy's (DOE) review of criteria necessary to approve permits for liquefied natural gas (LNG) export projects and the disastrous pause to all pending non-FTA export permit applications. This "LNG Plan" without input from Congress could have significant economic, environmental, and national security consequences domestically and globally. It would be reckless to jeopardize our advantage, especially in a world where energy is frequently being used as a geopolitical weapon.

U.S. LNG exports have served as a vital lifeline for countries in Europe and across the globe. Nearly half of U.S. LNG exports have been delivered to Europe to date,<sup>1</sup> with a significant increase in exports following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.<sup>2</sup> When European imports of LNG increased by 60 percent in 2022, U.S. LNG met that demand.<sup>3</sup>

Without U.S. LNG exports, European leaders would have to decide between depriving their own citizens of energy or actively funding Russia's war on Ukraine. Moreover, in December 2023, Russia exported LNG at record levels.<sup>4</sup> Russia is also in the process of dramatically expanding its future LNG export capacity.

Now, Iran-backed forces have provoked war in the Middle East and are threatening shipping lanes through which LNG is shipped to Europe and Asia. At the same time, Iran is seeking to benefit from the war by ramping its own domestic LNG exports to displace the very supplies it helped to disrupt.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Id.*

<sup>2</sup> Ben Cahill, "[U.S. LNG Export Boom: Defining National Interests](#)," Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 11, 2024.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> "[Russian LNG exports to Europe fell 1.9% in 2023 – LSEG data](#)," Reuters, January 2, 2024.

<sup>5</sup> "[Biden Toys With an LNG Export Ban](#)," Wall Street Journal, January 22, 2024.

American LNG exports have enhanced our geopolitical influence and international energy security across the board since 2016. In addition to Europe, U.S. LNG has a significant impact on energy security in Asia. Japan and South Korea have been the top two destinations for importing U.S. LNG.<sup>6</sup> Taiwan also imports U.S. LNG, and India is rapidly increasing its imports as well. According to EIA, the four Asian countries accounted for one-fifth of U.S. LNG exports between January and October of 2023.<sup>7</sup> Stable and secure supplies of U.S. LNG are critical to their energy security.

LNG exports from the United States are also uniquely suited to decrease global emissions. Both China and India, two of the largest polluters globally, are top destinations for U.S. LNG exports.<sup>8</sup> Efforts to limit the export of LNG from the United States thus directly undermines the ability to reduce emissions through the use of clean-burning natural gas.

Limiting U.S. LNG exports does not have any impact on the world's demand for natural gas. Instead, countries including Russia and Iran will simply produce more energy that is subject to less stringent environmental regulations. As a result, limiting American LNG exports in the name of stopping climate change could do just the opposite and add to global emissions.

Finally, the export of U.S. LNG provides significant economic benefits across the country. According to an ICF study, increased exports of U.S. LNG could create more than 450,000 jobs and increase GDP by \$73 billion.<sup>9</sup> Given the recent growth in the domestic LNG industry, those benefits could be even greater today and in the future.

We strongly urge you to stop this shortsighted effort. As the President of the United States and as the Secretary of Energy, you should be championing – not undermining – American LNG exports and the environmental, economic, and national security benefits to the United States and our allies.

Sincerely,



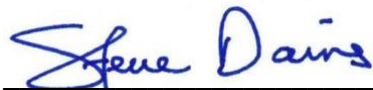
Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
United States Senator



John Barrasso  
United States Senator



James E. Risch  
United States Senator



Steve Daines  
United States Senator

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<sup>6</sup> “[LNG Monthly](#),” U.S. Department of Energy Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management, November 2023.

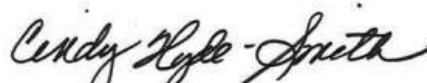
<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> “[Impact of LNG Exports on the U.S. Economy: A Brief Update](#),” ICF, September 2017.



Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator



Cindy Hyde-Smith  
United States Senator



Mike Lee  
United States Senator



Cynthia Lummis  
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan  
United States Senator



Ted Cruz  
United States Senator



Thom Tillis  
United States Senator



Ted Budd  
United States Senator



Mike Crapo  
United States Senator



Pete Ricketts  
United States Senator



Tommy Tuberville  
United States Senator



Marco Rubio  
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator



Jerry Moran  
United States Senator



Bill Hagerty  
United States Senator




Lindsey O. Graham  
United States Senator



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J.D. Vance  
United States Senator




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Tim Scott  
United States Senator




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James Lankford  
United States Senator




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Mike Rounds  
United States Senator



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John Cornyn  
United States Senator



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John Kennedy  
United States Senator

cc: The Honorable David Turk, Deputy Secretary of Energy (DOE)

The Honorable Brad Crabtree, Assistant Secretary for Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (DOE)

John Podesta, Senior Advisor to the President for Clean Energy Innovation and Implementation

Ali Zaidi, Assistant to the President and National Climate Advisor

The Honorable Anthony Blinken, Secretary, U.S. Department of State

Geoffrey Pyatt, Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Energy Resources, U.S. Department of State

Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor