

United States Senate

January 18, 2024

COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS
BUDGET
JUDICIARY
SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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

Dear Secretary Granholm,

As Ranking Member of the Energy and Water Subcommittee on Appropriations, I am tasked with the vital role of providing oversight of the Department of Energy. This oversight role includes everything from determining appropriations priorities to analyzing Department of Energy issued regulations and rulemakings. Recent reporting, however, leads me to be concerned that the Department of Energy, through new guidelines and rulemakings, will crush a burgeoning U.S. industry that employs tens of thousands of Americans, provides cheap and reliable energy to millions, and is a vital instrument in weening the world off of dirty Russian energy.

The United States is a world leader in natural gas, endowed with a sustainable supply that can meet our nation's growing energy demands for generations to come. It would be a mistake to limit arbitrarily our ability to utilize our natural gas resources by inventing additional obstacles in the already lengthy and extremely thorough process of securing a permit¹ to build U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG) facilities.

One need look no further than to our European allies to see why access to a secure supply of energy is critically important. Not only has the energy crisis in Europe highlighted the value of energy independence, it has also demonstrated the specific significance of U.S. LNG. The United States has been the European Union's largest supplier of LNG throughout their energy crisis. In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, our industry has been the linchpin in keeping the power and lights on. In the first 9 months of 2023, the United States exported just over 2 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas to our European and NATO allies.² Ditte Juul Jørgensen, Director General of the European Commission, has stated that Europe will depend on U.S. LNG for decades to come.³ Placing additional restrictions on America's ability to export its LNG would limit our ability to help our allies, to provide global energy security, and to remain an influential leader in the global energy market.

Since 2005, natural gas has helped the U.S. to reduce its power sector emissions by around 30%.⁴ This emissions decrease was largely the direct result of a shift from using coal to

¹ [Steps for LNG Project Approval](#)

² [DOE LNG Monthly Report](#)

³ [FT: Top EU energy official says US gas will be needed for decades](#)

⁴ [U.S. Energy Information Administration - EIA - Independent Statistics and Analysis](#)

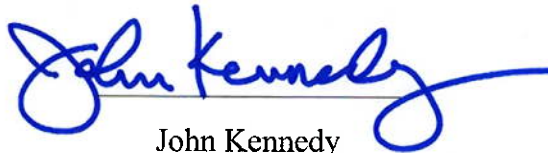
coal-fired generators and produce less CO₂ emissions and traditional pollutants such as SO_x and NO_x. Because LNG is an effective backup source of generation when renewable resources are limited, using more natural gas to generate electricity also makes it possible to use more renewable energy on the grid. This partnership can help natural gas meet the energy demand of the here-and-now as well as demand of tomorrow.

Further, having a robust supply of LNG on the global market gives countries more choice in supply of energy, which reduces their reliance on bad actors while helping developing nations reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Because natural gas generates dependable and consistent base-load power, the electric sector can use it to replace higher-emissions fuels like coal and fuel oil. Without a sufficient supply of LNG on the global market, however, it becomes more difficult for developing countries to create an effective decarbonization strategy or buy American products.

The need for developing countries to reduce their emissions, while still supplying a reliable source of energy to their citizens, is the challenge of our time. It would be counterproductive for policymakers to limit the U.S.'s ability to help countries tackle these pressing issues. Limiting American LNG's path to market will only force developing countries to seek out bad actors like Russia for their LNG needs and to rely more heavily on coal. This path ultimately increases global emissions and dilutes America's global influence.

The U.S. has a natural gas resource base that conservatively stands at close to 4,000 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas.⁵ Let's put that resource to its best use—to maintain our energy independence, to help our allies, to reduce emissions and to create good-paying jobs—instead of needlessly sidelining it.

Sincerely,



John Kennedy
United States Senator

⁵ <https://potentialgas.org/>