

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 29, 2025

The Honorable Chris Wright
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary
U.S. Department of Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20220

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Jamieson Greer
Ambassador
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretaries Wright, Burgum, Bessent, Lutnick, Kennedy, and Ambassador Greer,

We write in light of new reports that consumers are facing higher electricity prices than when President Biden left office,¹ despite President Trump’s campaign promise to “cut the price of energy and electricity in half.”² We seek answers regarding why President Trump has failed to lower energy prices for American consumers and what you intend to do to fix this problem. We write to you – a broad swath of the cabinet – because the increase in energy costs is driven by a broad swath of policies across the Trump Administration.

According to the latest data from the Consumer Price Index, under the Trump Administration, electricity prices are up nearly 5 percent from the start of the year and up by close to a full percentage point just last month.³ The National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA) released a new analysis finding that summer electric bills are likely to hit another record high, up 6.2 percent from last year.⁴ The average electric bill in the U.S. during the 2025

¹ CNBC, “Why Electricity Prices Are Surging for U.S. Households,” Greg Iacurci, June 21, 2025, <https://www.cnbc.com/2025/06/21/why-electricity-prices-are-surging-for-us-households.html>.

² Bridge Michigan, 100 Promises Donald Trump Made to Michigan | Bridge Michigan,” Mike Wilkinson, January 6, 2025, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/100-promises-donald-trump-made-michigan>.

³ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Consumer Price Index Summary,” July 15, 2025, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm>.

⁴ National Energy Assistance Directors Association, “Summer Residential Cooling Outlook: Residential Electric Utility Expenditures Projected to Reach Record Levels, Highest Level in at Least 12 years,” May 14, 2025, p. 1,

air conditioning season is projected to be \$784, the highest price in at least the last 12 years.⁵ At the same time, the Trump Administration is cutting programs that help families afford higher electricity costs and lower their energy usage, all while utility CEOs receive massive payouts.⁶

Rather than keeping his campaign promise to “cut the price of energy and electricity in half,”⁷ President Trump’s shortsighted approach to energy policy is driving prices higher and doing so quickly.⁸ Immediately after taking office in January 2025, President Trump signed an “energy emergency”⁹ executive order to purportedly address the “active threat to the American people from high energy prices.”¹⁰ But this effort has failed. As one expert noted, “every major action I’ve seen [President Trump] undertake is actually going to increase price[s].”¹¹ A combination of the Administration’s regulatory decisions, the impacts of tariffs, and the Administration’s reversal of key energy investments is driving up energy bills for Americans around the country.

Instead of feeling relief, families are paying higher and higher utility bills, “putting a strain on the wallets of consumers who are already stretched thin by rising costs for food, shelter and insurance.”¹² This is causing financial hardship for millions of Americans. According to NEADA, “one out of six (21.2 million) of all U.S. households are behind on their energy bills. That number will only continue to rise as customers struggle with the dual burden of expensive heating and cooling seasons.”¹³ As a result of high energy costs, “nearly 77 million households [are] forced to reduce or forgo basic necessities such as medicine or food in order to pay an energy bill at least once or twice a year.”¹⁴ These high energy costs represent a costly broken promise by President Trump.

<https://neada.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/SummerEnergyOutlook2025.pdf>

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Reuters, “Top US Power Sector CEOs Pull down \$115 Million in Performance Pay,” Tim McLaughlin, April 14, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/top-us-power-sector-ceos-pull-down-115-million-performance-pay-2025-04-14/>.

⁷ Bridge Michigan, “100 Promises Donald Trump Made to Michigan | Bridge Michigan,” Mike Wilkinson, January 6, 2025, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/100-promises-donald-trump-made-michigan>.

⁸ New York Times, “Data Centers’ Hunger for Energy Could Raise All Electric Bills,” Ivan Penn, May 16, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/16/business/energy-environment/data-centers-utilities-electricity-bills.html>.

⁹ The White House, “Declaring a National Energy Emergency,” January 20, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/declaring-a-national-energy-emergency/>.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ E&E News, “Trump’s Push for More LNG Exports Risks Domestic Price Surge,” Mike Soraghan, April 14, 2025, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/trumps-push-for-more-lng-exports-risks-domestic-price-surge/#:~:text=Any%20increase%20in%20energy%20costs,consumer%20advocacy%20group's%20energy%20program>.

¹² Wall Street Journal, “Your Electric Bill Is Rising Faster Than Inflation. Here’s Why,” Jennifer Hiller, June 13, 2025, https://www.wsj.com/business/energy-oil/your-electric-bill-is-rising-faster-than-inflation-heres-why-139b5d12?gaa_at=eafs&gaa_n=ASWzDAi8oxkMPzLdq0_g-CQbfJy8CZO8asKGZ8i9KPjHsf0VX87WFpQ8SL_AIJU6L4g%3D&gaa_ts=6851796d&gaa_sig=gW0TYjz74Y4Qlg4JTW0Xb30_WtPr-WjHWRQPNrRcSE0c_OapkX3wvN_ehWHTA5eaj-5xHGhlxOQ_RWrLL62vQw%3D%3D.

¹³ National Energy Assistance Directors Association, “Summer Residential Cooling Outlook: Residential Electric Utility Expenditures Projected to Reach Record Levels, Highest Level in at Least 12 years,” May 14, 2025, p. 6, <https://neada.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/SummerEnergyOutlookReport-2025-FinalA-4.pdf>.

¹⁴ Center for American Progress, “With Americans Facing Utility Bill Increases This Year, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act Threatens To Drive Costs Even Higher,” Akshay Thyagarajan and Shannon Baker-Branstetter, June 13, 2025, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/with-americans-facing-utility-bill-increases-this-year-the-one-big-beautiful-bill-act-threatens-to-drive-costs-even-higher/>.

Week after week, the Trump Administration continues to make an already dire situation even worse:

- The President's "Big Beautiful Bill" makes cuts to existing clean energy and manufacturing tax credits that will lead to the loss of 1.6 million jobs, and elimination of \$980 billion in GDP growth.¹⁵ The final law will result in a \$280 increase in average American household energy costs per year over the next decade.¹⁶
- President Trump's efforts to sell more gas overseas risk creating a domestic price surge due to draining domestic supplies.¹⁷
- The Trump Administration is forcing states to keep defunct, unwanted, and unneeded coal plants open in several states, foisting tens of millions of dollars of new maintenance and retention costs onto consumers in 15 states.¹⁸
- President Trump's chaotic and poorly planned tariffs policy is increasing costs for building materials for transmission lines and electrical equipment, and "virtually every other segment of the supply chain,"¹⁹ imposing additional costs on consumers.²⁰
- President Trump's reckless decision to bomb Iran has created additional uncertainty over global oil prices, as prices first spiked after the bombing, then declined as hostilities temporarily cooled. "[N]obody knows" what comes next.²¹
- The Administration has proposed entirely eliminating funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) after firing the entirety of the program's staff, which provides \$4 billion in assistance to approximately 6 million low-income families who rely on this funding to pay their utility bills.²²

¹⁵ Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, "Final Senate Reconciliation Bill: Latest Model Outlines Job Losses, Economic Risk," press release, July 1, 2025, <https://www.c2es.org/press-release/senate-budget-bill-latest-model-outlines-job-loss-economic-risk/>; Energy Innovation, "Updated: Economic Impacts Of U.S. "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" Energy Provisions," Robbie Orvis, Megan Mahajan, and Dan O'Brien, July 1, 2025, <https://energyinnovation.org/report/updated-economic-impacts-of-u-s-senate-passed-one-big-beautiful-bill-act-energy-provisions/>.

¹⁶ Princeton University ZERO Lab, "Impacts of the One Big Beautiful Bill On The US Energy Transition – Summary Report," Jesse Jenkins, Jamil Farbes, and Ben Haley, July 3, 2025, <https://zenodo.org/records/15801701>.

¹⁷ E&E News, "Trump's Push for More LNG Exports Risks Domestic Price Surge," Mike Soraghan, April 14, 2025, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/trumps-push-for-more-lng-exports-risks-domestic-price-surge/#:~:text=Any%20increase%20in%20energy%20costs,consumer%20advocacy%20group's%20energy%20program.>; New York Times, "Electricity Prices Are Surging. The G.O.P. Megabill Could Push Them Higher," Brad Plumer and Rebecca F. Elliott, June 4, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/04/climate/electricity-prices-republican-big-beautiful-bill.html>.

¹⁸ CNN, "The Trump Admin Ordered a Coal Power Plant to Stay on Past Retirement. Customers in 15 States Will Foot the Bill," Ella Nilsen, June 6, 2025, <https://www.cnn.com/2025/06/06/climate/michigan-coal-plant-energy-cost-wright>.

¹⁹ Clean Air Task Force, "Policy Brief: How Tariffs Are Undermining U.S. Energy and Economic Security," David Yellen and Sagatom Saha, June 4, 2025, <https://www.catf.us/resource/policy-brief-how-tariffs-undermining-us-energy-economic-security/>.

²⁰ Wood Mackenzie, "Tariffs to increase costs and slow down development for US power industry," press release, June 2, 2025, <https://www.woodmac.com/press-releases/tariffs-to-increase-costs-and-slow-down-development-for-us-power-industry/>.

²¹ PBS News, "'Nobody Knows What I'm Going to Do,' Trump Says on Iran," Aamer Madhani, June 18, 2025, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/watch-nobody-knows-what-im-going-to-do-trump-says-on-iran>.

²² Fuel Oil News, "President's 2026 Budget Eliminates Federal Funding for LIHEAP," Stephen Bennett, May 13, 2025, <https://fueloilnews.com/2025/05/13/presidents-2026-budget-eliminates-federal-funding-for-liheap/>; National

- The Energy Department is in the process of rolling back energy efficiency and water conservation standards, which save households close to \$600 annually on water and gas bills.²³

The Administration must reverse its path of increased energy prices and instead work to cut energy costs for American families. To better understand how the Administration plans to lower prices for consumers, we ask that you provide answers to the following questions no later than August 11, 2025:

1. President Trump promised on the campaign trail to cut energy prices, and early in his term declared an “energy emergency” in a purported attempt to boost energy supply and bring down prices. These efforts have failed, with consumers paying record-high energy prices this summer. Have Administration officials analyzed the reasons for these failures? If so, please provide an explanation for why these efforts have failed.
2. Utility prices are soaring, even as electric, gas, and water utility companies earn huge profits and pay their CEOs massive bonuses. Has the Administration conducted any analyses to determine if utility companies are profiteering from the chaos surrounding energy markets and imposing excessive price increases on consumers? If so, does the Administration intend to act to prevent these excessive price increases?
3. Did the Administration account for the possibility that increased sales of natural gas overseas would cause a “domestic surge” in prices?
4. Why did the Administration force economically defunct coal and gas plants to remain online in several states?
 - a. Did the Administration conduct an evaluation of whether keeping these plants online would result in increased costs for consumers in those areas before making this decision? If so, please provide a copy of said evaluation.
 - b. Is the Administration prepared to reverse course and allow states to close these plants given the increased costs this has imposed on consumers?
5. Did the Energy Department or any other executive branch agency model the impact of President Trump’s tariffs on electricity and other utility prices?
 - a. If so, what did these models show?
 - b. Is the Administration considering any changes to President Trump’s tariff policy to address the problems caused by increased electricity prices?
6. Why did the Administration decide to cut LIHEAP funding and staff, given the rising energy prices consumers are facing?
7. What, if any, modelling was used to support the Administration’s decision to repeal energy efficiency standards?
 - a. Does the Administration believe that energy efficiency standards cannot help lower costs for Americans?

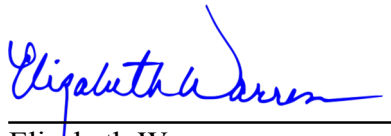
Low Income Housing Coalition, “Entire LIHEAP Staff at HHS Fired, Jeopardizing Distribution of Home Energy Bill Assistance for Low-Income Households,” April 7, 2025, <https://nlihc.org/resource/entire-liheap-staff-hhs-fired-jeopardizing-distribution-home-energy-bill-assistance-low>.

²³ New York Times, “Energy Department to Repeal Efficiency Rules for Appliances,” Hiroko Tabuchi and Lisa Friedman, May 12, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/12/climate/energy-efficiency-programs-department-of-energy.html>.

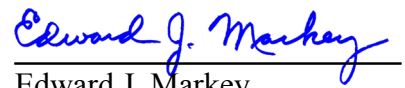
8. What, if any, modelling was used to support the Administration's executive order to wind down clean energy credits?²⁴
 - a. Were there considerations about how these repeals would impact consumer utility bills?
9. What is the Administration's plan to cut energy prices in the short term now that current policies are failing to do so?

We thank you for your attention to this matter.


Sincerely,




Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

²⁴ The White House, "ENDING MARKET DISTORTING SUBSIDIES FOR UNRELIABLE, FOREIGN CONTROLLED ENERGY SOURCES," July 7, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/07/ending-market-distorting-subsidies-for-unreliable-foreign%E2%80%91controlled-energy-sources/>.