

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 25, 2026

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

Dear Secretary Wright:

We write regarding our concerns that the Trump Administration's policies regarding liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports are contributing to rapidly rising utility prices for American consumers. According to the non-partisan Energy Information Administration (EIA), wholesale natural gas prices, which increased more than 55% last year,¹ are expected to increase by another 16% this year, "primarily due to" LNG exports.² Indeed, the consumer price index for utility piped gas service rose close to 11% in 2025,³ meaning higher natural gas heating costs for residential consumers. Yet, last fall, you declared your desire to "double the natural gas exports"⁴ of the United States. We urge you to reconsider the Administration's stance on LNG exports and instead take action to reduce consumers' utility bills.

Natural gas prices greatly influence the price of electricity, and "with so much of the electricity market supplied and set by natural gas, U.S. electricity prices are now highly susceptible to changes in natural gas markets."⁵ Last year, 40% of electricity generation was fueled by natural gas,⁶ outpacing all other energy sources, "so natural gas prices are directly reflected in power bills in most U.S. states."⁷ A recent analysis from Public Citizen found that, in the first nine

¹ Energy Information Administration, "In 2025, U.S. natural gas spot prices increased from 2024's record low," Andrew Iraola, January 9, 2026, <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=66984>.

² Energy Information Administration, "Short-Term Energy Outlook November 2025," November 2025, <https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/steo/archives/nov25.pdf>.

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "CONSUMER PRICE INDEX – DECEMBER 2025," January 13, 2026, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm>.

⁴ Energy Connects, "The US plans to double its natural gas exports in the next five years to address growing global demand," Energy Connects, September 10, 2025, <https://www.energyconnects.com/opinion/features/2025/september/the-us-plans-to-double-its-natural-gas-exports-in-the-next-five-years-to-address-growing-global-demand/>.

⁵ Center for American Progress, "Residents of 49 States and Washington, D.C., Face Increasing Electric and Natural Gas Bills," Lucero Marquez, Amanda Levin, and Akshay Thyagarajan, October 27, 2025, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/residents-of-49-states-and-washington-d-c-face-increasing-electric-and-natural-gas-bills/>.

⁶ Energy Information Administration, "Solar power generation drives electricity generation growth over the next two years," Tyler Hodge and Katherine Antonio, January 16, 2026, <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=67005>.

⁷ Public Citizen, "Exported Energy Affordability: How Trump's Failed Energy Policy IS Driving America's Energy Affordability Crisis," Tyson Slocum, December 16, 2025, <https://www.citizen.org/article/exported-energy-affordability-how-trumps-failed-energy-policy-is-driving-americas-energy-affordability-crisis/>.

months of 2025, American households paid an average of \$124 more on their utility bills than in the same period one year before due to these rising natural gas prices.⁸

LNG exports increase natural gas prices. In June 2025, the EIA found that “higher natural gas prices in 2025 and [estimated prices in] 2026 are the result of strong export growth that persistently outpaces U.S. natural gas production.”⁹ Utility companies and state regulators have confirmed that LNG exports are a key cause of higher bills.¹⁰ The mechanism is simple supply and demand: increased exports leave less natural gas available for domestic consumers and allow traders to chase the highest global price, increasing prices for residential ratepayers.

Despite the impact of LNG exports on domestic natural gas prices, you have indicated that you will seek to “double the natural gas exports from where they are today in the next four or five years.”¹¹ Already during the Trump Administration, LNG exports have increased dramatically: growing 26% in 2025 and expected to increase by an additional 9% in 2026.¹² The pro-LNG-export policies of the Administration will put “upward pressure on natural gas prices,”¹³ according to the EIA, and the Administration’s fast-tracking of LNG terminal permitting¹⁴ has only added to this pressure. Since the Trump Administration reversed the Biden Administration’s pause for pending and future LNG exports,¹⁵ the United States “became the first country to export more than 100 million metric tons”¹⁶ of LNG, further tying domestic consumers to volatile global gas markets.¹⁷ And as our allies are well-supplied by already-approved LNG

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Energy Information Administration, “Short-Term Energy Outlook June 2025,” June 2025, <https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/steo/archives/Jun25.pdf>.

¹⁰ Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, “LNG exports and U.S. power price,” Dennis Wamsted and Seath Feaster, August 4, 2025, <https://ieefa.org/resources/lng-exports-and-us-power-price>. Note: this article cites to examples such as Ohio Public Utilities Commission, “News Bureau: Natural gas prices on the rise,” August 30, 2022, <https://puco.ohio.gov/news/news-bureau-natural-gas-prices-rise>; Citizens Energy Group, “Citizens Projects Increase in Natural Gas Bills,” press release, October 12, 2022, <https://blog.citizensenergygroup.com/news/citizens-projects-increase-in-natural-gas-bills>.

¹¹ Energy Connects, “The US plans to double its natural gas exports in the next five years to address growing global demand,” Energy Connects, September 10, 2025, <https://www.energyconnects.com/opinion/features/2025/september/the-us-plans-to-double-its-natural-gas-exports-in-the-next-five-years-to-address-growing-global-demand/>.

¹² Energy Information Administration, “Short-Term Energy Outlook January 2026,” January 13, 2026, <https://www.eia.gov/outlooks/steo/report/natgas.php#:~:text=Growth%20in%20total%20demand%20is,3%2C%20and%20Golden%20Pass%20LNG>.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Energy, “President Trump is Delivering on LNG,” June 11, 2025, https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2025-06/Jera_LNG_Factsheet_061125.pdf; Sierra Club, “The Largest Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal Is One Step Closer to Completion,” Delaney Nolan, April 14, 2025, <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/largest-liquefied-natural-gas-terminal-one-step-closer-completion>.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Energy, “U.S. Department of Energy Reverses Biden LNG Pause, Restores Trump Energy Dominance Agenda,” January 20, 2025, <https://www.energy.gov/articles/us-department-energy-reverses-biden-lng-pause-restores-trump-energy-dominance-agenda>.

¹⁶ Reuters, “US sets new LNG export records banner year marked by new capacity,” Curtis Williams, January 2, 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/us-sets-new-lng-export-records-banner-year-marked-by-new-capacity-2026-01-02/>.

¹⁷ Public Citizen, “The Impact of LNG Exports on U.S. Energy Bills and Inflation,” Public Citizen and Symons Public Affairs, May 2, 2024, <https://www.citizen.org/article/the-impact-of-lng-exports-on-u-s-energy-bills-and-inflation/>.

exports,¹⁸ we believe the Administration should turn its attention to the families that continue to struggle with their rapidly increasing heating bills.

Adding insult to injury, the growth of LNG exports has helped line the pockets of oil executives at the expense of American families. Cheniere Energy, the largest American LNG exporter, increased its earnings by \$125 million in the first three quarters of 2025 compared to the year prior.¹⁹ Venture Global, the second-largest American LNG exporter, more than doubled its 2024 earnings in the first three quarters of 2025.²⁰

These increases in LNG exports—and other regulatory actions by the Administration—have also benefitted big contributors²¹ to the Trump campaign. Venture Global’s CEO Michael Sabel attended the April 2024 Mar-a-Lago “energy round table” fundraiser where attendees were asked to donate a billion dollars to President Trump’s campaign.²² Venture Global then donated \$1 million to President Trump’s inauguration,²³ and later, Venture Global’s CP2 LNG terminal project was granted an export license from the Department of Energy (DOE).²⁴ Energy Transfer Partners CEO Kelcy Warren donated \$25 million²⁵ to the main super PAC supporting President Trump and also personally contributed \$5 million²⁶ to the President’s campaign. Then, Energy Transfer received a three-year extension for an LNG project last May from the Federal Energy

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Energy Office of Fossil Fuel Energy and Carbon Management, “Energy, Economic, and Environmental Assessment of U.S. LNG Exports,” December 2024, p. S-22, https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2024-12/LNGUpdate_SummaryReport_Dec2024_230pm.pdf.

¹⁹ Cheniere Energy, Inc., “Cheniere Reports Third Quarter 2025 Results, Reconfirms Full Year 2025 EBITDA Guidance and Raises Full Year 2025 Distributable Cash Flow Guidance,” press release, October 30, 2025, <https://lngir.cheniere.com/news-events/press-releases/detail/328/cheniere-reports-third-quarter-2025-results-reconfirms#>.

²⁰ Venture Global, “Venture Global Reports Fourth Quarter and Full Year 2024 Results,” press release, March 6, 2025, <https://investors.ventureglobal.com/news/news-details/2025/Venture-Global-Reports-Fourth-Quarter-and-Full-Year-2024-Results/>; Venture Global, “Venture Global Reports Third Quarter 2025 Results,” press release, November 10, 2025, <https://investors.ventureglobal.com/news/news-details/2025/Venture-Global-Reports-Third-Quarter-2025-Results/default.aspx>.

²¹ Wall Street Journal, “The Aspiring \$110 Billion Energy Company Banking on Trump’s Return,” Benoit Morenne, January 19, 2025, https://www.wsj.com/business/energy-oil/venture-global-ipo-e653994c?st=OLyJn5&reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink; The Guardian, “Trump promised riches from ‘liquid gold’ in the US. Now fossil fuel donors are benefiting,” Dharna Noor, June 18, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jun/18/trump-oil-gas-industry-donors>.

²² New York Times, “At a Dinner, Trump Assailed Climate Rules and Asked \$1 Billion From Big Oil,” Lisa Friedman, Coral Davenport, Jonathan Swan and Maggie Haberman, May 9, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/09/climate/trump-oil-gas-mar-a-lago.html>.

²³ OpenSecrets, “Ventur Global LNG Cycle 2024,” <https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/venture-global-lng/summary?toprecipcycle=2024&contribcycle=2024&lobcycle=2024&outspendcycle=2024&id=D000082067&topnumcycle=2024>.

²⁴ U.S. Department of Energy, “Secretary Wright Signs Export Authorization for Venture Global CP2 LNG,” press release, March 19, 2025, <https://www.energy.gov/articles/secretary-wright-signs-export-authorization-venture-global-cp2-lng>.

²⁵ Brennan Center for Justice, “Unprecedented Big Money Surge for Super PAC Tied to Trump,” Ian Vandewalker, August 5, 2025, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/unprecedented-big-money-surge-super-pac-tied-trump>.

²⁶ The Guardian, “Trump promised riches from ‘liquid gold’ in the US. Now fossil fuel donors are benefiting,” Dharna Noor, June 18, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jun/18/trump-oil-gas-industry-donors>.

Regulatory Commission (FERC)²⁷ and a similar extension from DOE in August.²⁸ Following the FERC extension, “Warren’s wealth rose by nearly 10%.”²⁹

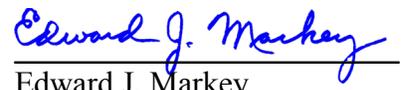
Early in 2025, you said, “[w]e certainly don’t want to grow our [LNG] export industry and penalize American citizens. That is an unacceptable outcome.”³⁰ We agree. However, the Trump Administration’s LNG export policies are not putting America first: they have jacked up utility prices for families, leaving many Americans struggling with the cost of heating their homes this winter—a trend that is only projected to get worse as you allow exports to surge. We urge DOE to reconsider its plan to increase LNG exports while Americans face higher utility and gas prices and ask that you provide a written response detailing your commitment to do so by March 11, 2026.

Sincerely,


Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator


Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator


Jack Reed
United States Senator


Edward J. Markey
United States Senator


Bernard Sanders
United States Senator


Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

²⁷ Natural Gas Intelligence, “FERC Extends Lake Charles LNG In-Service Date as Energy Transfer Pursues FID,” Jacob Dick, May 13, 2025, <https://naturalgasintel.com/news/ferc-extends-lake-charles-lng-in-service-date-as-energy-transfer-pursues-fid/#>.

²⁸ U.S. Department of Energy, “DOE Grants Lake Charles LNG Additional Time to Commence Exports,” press release, August 22, 2025, <https://www.energy.gov/articles/doe-grants-lake-charles-lng-additional-time-commence-exports>.

²⁹ The Guardian, “Trump promised riches from ‘liquid gold’ in the US. Now fossil fuel donors are benefiting,” Dharna Noor, June 18, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jun/18/trump-oil-gas-industry-donors>.

³⁰ U.S. Department of Energy, “Secretary Wright signs fourth LNG Export Permit with Q&A session at CERAWEEK 2025 – March 10th, 2025,” March 11, 2025, 11:30 timestamp, <https://youtu.be/HznCh7tEQqk?si=xF7GjhDxY1JfS6Da&t=690>.



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator