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

The Honorable Jennifer M. Granholm Secretary Department of Energy 1000 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20585

Dear President Biden and Secretary Granholm,

On January 26, 2024, the Biden administration announced that the United States Department of Energy would pause new export authorizations for liquefied fossil gas, also called liquefied natural gas (LNG), to countries without free trade agreements. As members of parliaments from nations across the globe, we welcomed this bold move for climate action. Although a recent Louisiana district court ruling stayed this pause, that misguided decision does not force any immediate export project approvals, prevent the Department of Energy (DOE) from updating its environmental and economic analyses, or impact the factors that DOE already considers in its application review process. As countries worldwide continue efforts to transition rapidly to a fossil-fuel-free future, we urge you to reject new U.S. LNG export permits, none of which are in the public interest. Doing so will help protect communities from the environmental harm that fossil gas causes; promote global energy security and encourage investment and trade in clean energy technologies; and help our nations satisfy both national and global climate commitments, including those made at the 2023 U.N. climate change conference COP28 in Dubai.

Far from being a clean "bridge" fuel, LNG causes significant environmental harm.¹ In addition to the carbon dioxide released when LNG is burned, the potent greenhouse gas effects of pervasive methane leaks throughout the LNG supply chain—which extends from initial exploration all the way through gas production, pipeline transportation, liquefaction, vessel transportation, regasification, distribution, and end-use consumption—likely eliminate any climate advantage of reduced carbon dioxide emissions.² Additionally, the practice of hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") used to extract gas and its related wastewater disposal processes can cause

¹ Brian Palmer, *Liquefied Natural Gas 101*, Natural Resources Defense Council (February 9, 2024). https://www.nrdc.org/stories/liquefied-natural-gas-101.

² Hiroko Tabuchi, *Leaks Can Make Natural Gas as Bad for the Climate as Coal, a Study Says*, N.Y. Times (July 13, 2023), https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/13/climate/natural-gas-leaks-coal-climate-change.html.

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earthquakes and degrade drinking water quality.³ Finally, communities near LNG infrastructure—including processing plants, import facilities, export terminals, and pipelines—face disproportionate health burdens from local air emissions.⁴

In addition to the environmental and health benefits, limiting U.S. LNG exports will actually support global energy security, not jeopardize it. In both emerging and developed markets, overinvestment in LNG diverts resources away from cheaper, more stable, and less tradedependent clean energy investments. Moreover, lackluster LNG demand growth and growing LNG export capacity will create a significant global supply glut within several years. The current LNG boom and imminent supply glut has been fueled by global commodity speculators, including energy trading companies, who are now buying the largest share of LNG from new export facilities. As the last several years of global gas market turmoil has demonstrated, speculation and price volatility benefits gas and LNG traders while hurting consumers. Curtailing U.S. LNG export activity will send a strong global signal in favor of new investments in renewable energy, discouraging overinvestment in a volatile and high-priced fossil fuel.

As the world's largest exporter of LNG, the United States is encouraging continued reliance on an emissions-intensive fossil fuel that will lead the world astray from national and international climate commitments. The International Energy Agency (IEA) found that by 2030, global fossil gas consumption would need to decline by 20 percent from current levels to limit global warming to below 1.5 degrees Celsius. By 2050, consumption would need to drop by 70 percent. U.S. LNG exports affect the world's regions in various ways, but uniformly, they are negative. As a leader in the global arena, the United States should not be contributing to the growth of an industry with demonstrated adverse impacts on climate ambitions, economic stability, and energy security.

³ Does Fracking Cause Earthquakes?, U.S. Geological Survey, https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/does-fracking-cause-earthquakes (last accessed July 2, 2024); Hydraulic Fracturing for Oil and Gas: Impacts from the Hydraulic Fracturing Water Cycle on Drinking Water Resources in the United States, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Dec. 2016), https://cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/hfstudy/recordisplay.cfm?deid=332990.

⁴ Morgan Johnson, *DOE Puts People First: LNG Exports Paused Pending Review*, Natural Resources Defense Council (Jan. 31, 2024), https://www.nrdc.org/bio/morgan-johnson/doe-puts-people-first-lng-exports-paused-pending-review

⁵ Shafiqul Alam et al., *Global LNG Outlook 2024-2028*, Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (Apr. 2024), https://ieefa.org/resources/global-lng-outlook-2024-2028.

⁷ Shruti Shukla, *Power Shift: Renewables Beat LNG for Climate and Competitiveness*, Natural Resources Defense Council (Dec. 4, 2023), https://www.nrdc.org/resources/power-shift-renewables-beat-lng-climate-and competitiveness#:~:text=In%20the%20final%20analysis%2C%20clean,line%20with%20their%20climate%20comm itments.

⁸ Net Zero by 2050, International Energy Agency (Oct. 2021), https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/deebef5d-0c34-4539-9d0c-10b13d840027/NetZeroby2050-ARoadmapfortheGlobalEnergySector_CORR.pdf.

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Europe

Supporters of U.S. LNG exports frequently argue that they will help Europe transition away from Russian fossil fuels and solve its energy crisis. But while Europe's energy system was strained in the immediate aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, it has since recovered. Europeans united to slash overall gas demand by 20 percent over the past two years. Renewable power replaced expensive gas in electricity generation, and heat pumps reduced the need for gas-powered heating. Now, only one in twenty energy units consumed in the EU is from Russia—down from one in five before the war. Gas prices are lower than before the start of the war, despite drastically lower supply from Russia. As a result of lower overall gas demand, the European Union reduced LNG imports by 13 percent in the first quarter of 2024, while still exceeding gas storage targets. Furthermore, the utilization rate of European LNG terminals in the first half of 2024 was only 47 percent, even lower than the 62 percent rate in 2023. As European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen recently announced, the acute energy crisis that shook up Europe is over, and there is no foreseeable increased demand for U.S. LNG.

Asia

Asia's LNG market is heavily characterized by re-selling activities amidst growing market unpredictability. China, the world's largest LNG importer, has emerged as a major re-exporter within the region and globally, cashing in on lucrative price differentials that are facilitated by long-term agreements with the United States. Moreover, China's LNG imports are not displacing its coal consumption—contrary to common industry claims that LNG is a "bridge fuel" from coal to clean energy. These trends affirm that global energy security and climate goals play a secondary role in the expansion of U.S. LNG exports. Instead, the primary beneficiaries are commodity traders and re-sellers profiting from market volatility, often to the

⁹ Ben Cahill & Kunro Irie, *European Gas Storage Is Nearly Full. Now What?*, Center for Strategic and International Studies (Sept. 5, 2023), https://www.csis.org/analysis/european-gas-storage-nearly-full-now-what.

¹⁰ Shafiqul Alam et al., *Global LNG Outlook* 2024-2028, Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (Apr. 2024), https://ieefa.org/resources/global-lng-outlook-2024-2028.

¹¹ Faith Birol & Ursula von der Leyen, *Europe Has Taken Its Energy Destiny Back Into Its Own Hands*, International Energy Agency (Apr. 12, 2024), https://www.iea.org/commentaries/europe-has-taken-its-energy-destiny-back-into-its-own-hands.

¹² FRED Economic Data, https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PNGASEUUSDM (last visited May 21, 2024).

¹³ EU Imports of Energy Products, Eurostat (June 2024), https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_imports_of_energy_products_recent_developments&oldid=554503#Overview;

¹⁴ Key developments in European gas wholesale markets, European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (July 18, 2024),

https://www.acer.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Publications/ACER_2024_MMR_Gas_Key_Developments _Q1_Q2.pdf (last visited July 22, 2024).

¹⁵ Fatih Birol & Ursula von der Leyen, *Europe Has Taken Its Energy Destiny Back Into Its Own Hands*, International Energy Agency (Apr. 12, 2024), https://www.iea.org/commentaries/europe-has-taken-its-energy-destiny-back-into-its-own-hands.

¹⁶ EU Imports of Energy Products, Eurostat (June 2024), https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_imports_of_energy_products_recent_developments&oldid=554503#Overview;

¹⁷ Sam Reynolds et al., *LNG Is Not Displacing Coal in China's Power Mix*, Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (June 25, 2024), https://ieefa.org/resources/lng-not-displacing-coal-chinas-power-mix

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detriment of emerging markets.¹⁸ Similarly, Japan, facing declining domestic demand and oversupply, is redirecting LNG trade volumes to emerging markets in South and Southeast Asia, bolstering profitable re-trading ventures.¹⁹ South Korea, despite existing low terminal utilization and climate commitments, has invested significantly in expanding LNG infrastructure, highlighting a mismatch between capacity expansions and actual demand.²⁰ South Korean gas companies are also investing in LNG projects in emerging markets like Vietnam, where the proposed Hai Lang gas plant could lead to higher consumer energy costs.²¹ In emerging Asian economies, LNG for power generation is often significantly more expensive than renewable technologies, adding an economic imperative to the clean energy transition.²²

The LNG market in Asia reflects a broader issue in the global energy transition, in which wealthier nations offload fossil fuel surpluses to developing nations, perpetuating price inflation and delaying clean energy transitions. Therefore, increasing U.S. LNG export capacity in response to artificially inflated demand would exacerbate these inequities, rather than address genuine energy needs in Asia.

Africa

In Africa, the expansion of LNG export infrastructure has sparked displacement, conflict, and environmental degradation, with many projects facing the risk of becoming stranded assets amid declining global demand. Currently, eight African nations—Egypt, Algeria, Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Angola, the Republic of Congo, and Mozambique—are engaged in LNG production for export, with additional countries such as Senegal, Mauritania, Tanzania, and Ethiopia aiming to join them by 2035. Despite plans by Nigeria and Mozambique to launch new LNG facilities, the economic viability of delayed projects in Mozambique and Tanzania, set for operational readiness by 2028, are threatened by a looming supply glut. ²⁴ The introduction of new LNG infrastructure by multinational and U.S. firms has been met with local opposition,

¹⁸ Sam Reynolds, *Concerns About the US LNG Pause in Asia Are Overblown*, Eco-Business (Feb. 6, 2024), https://www.eco-business.com/opinion/concerns-about-the-us-lng-pause-in-asia-are-overblown/.

¹⁹ Yuka Obayashi & Katya Golubkova, *Japan's JERA Sees More LNG Going to Asia As Domestic Demand Shrinks*, Reuters (Apr. 30, 2023), https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/japans-jera-sees-more-lng-going-asia-domestic-demand-shrinks-2023-04-30/; Yuichi Shiga & Sayumi Take, *Japan Pushes LNG in Southeast Asia As Its Own Demand Slows*, Nikkei Asia (May 2, 2024), https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Energy/Japan-pushes-LNG-in-Southeast-Asia-as-its-own-demand-slows.

²⁰ Michelle (Chaewon) Kim, *South Korea's LNG overbuild*, Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (Nov. 29, 2023), https://ieefa.org/resources/south-koreas-lng-overbuild.

²¹ Tim Daiss, *Corporate Self-Interest Drive Vietnam LNG Development*, Gas Outlook (May 20, 2024), https://gasoutlook.com/analysis/corporate-self-interest-drives-vietnam-lng-development/

²² Solar Inflation Reverses as Renewable Costs in Asia Reach All-time Low, Wood Mackenzie (February 29, 2024), https://www.woodmac.com/press-releases/asia-

lcoe/#:~:text=29%20February%202024,be%2032%25%20cheaper%20by%202030

²³ NJ Ayuk, *The Coming Geographical Shift in Africa's LNG Industry by Senegal, Congo, Mauritania, Mozambique, and Tanzania Africa*, Energy Chamber (Oct. 2023), https://energychamber.org/the-coming-geographical-shift-in-africas-lng-industry-by-senegal-congo-mauritania-mozambique-and-tanzania/.

²⁴ Simon Nicholas, *African LNG Projects Threatened By A Global Wave Of New Capacity*, Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (May 1, 2024), https://ieefa.org/resources/african-lng-projects-threatened-global-wave-new-capacity.

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perpetuating a pattern of exploitation of African lands and resources.²⁵ In Mozambique, the development of LNG infrastructure in Cabo Delgado has leveled vital community resources, displaced families, and increased the presence of insurgent groups and state armed forces that commit violence against civilians.²⁶ Moreover, these ventures offer minimal economic benefits to host nations, jeopardize community health, and divert resources from potential investments in clean energy. The African LNG export market parallels the United States in prioritizing foreign market interests over local needs amidst declining demand. U.S. participation in the LNG export market fuels this exploitative industry, undermining claims of leadership in a just global energy transition. Divesting from the volatile and unsustainable LNG sector should be a primary focus for genuine environmental and social progress.

The Americas

U.S. gas exports play a critical role in Mexico's nascent LNG industry. U.S. companies have turned to Mexico as a strategic re-exporter, moving U.S. LNG by pipeline to export facilities in Mexico to sidestep siting and construction challenges and reach Asian import markets without going through the Panama Canal.²⁷ Investments in new re-exporting infrastructure in Mexico will soon become stranded assets with poor financial viability, threatening the economic stability of the country for the benefit of short-term U.S. interests. Moreover, the export of U.S. LNG through Mexico also transfers environmental and climate justice burdens associated with LNG infrastructure, expanding the footprint of the industry's harm to the country's unique biodiversity and frontline communities in Mexico.²⁸

Several other countries in the Americas are seen as potential global market suppliers of LNG, including Canada, Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Argentina. In Canada, there are eight LNG export projects proposed or in construction, all of which target Asian and European markets that are already seeing declines in demand.²⁹ Like projects in Africa, LNG projects in the Americas face a profound market glut, security concerns, and local opposition, without substantial benefits to domestic energy and economic security.

²⁵ Richard Halsey et al., *Navigating Decisions: The risks to Mozambique from liquified natural gas export projects*, International Institute for Sustainable Development (Dec. 2023), https://www.iisd.org/system/files/2023-12/navigating-decisions-lng-exports-risks-mozambique.pdf;

²⁶ Sophie Neiman, "Double Attack": The Curse of Natural Gas and Armed Groups in Mozambique, Al Jazeera (June 16, 2024), https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2024/6/16/double-attack-the-curse-of-natural-gas-and-armed-groups-in-mozambique

²⁷ Ben Cahill & Sophie Coste, *Subtle Shift in U.S. LNG Export Authorizations*, Center for Strategic International Studies (July 28, 2023), https://www.csis.org/analysis/subtle-shift-us-lng-export-authorizations; Nicole Pollack, *Mexico begins its own LNG buildout as US developers look to the south*, Canary Media (Feb. 15, 2024), https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/liquefied-natural-gas/mexico-begins-its-own-lng-buildout-as-us-developers-look-to-the-south; Martha Pskowski, *LNG Exports From Mexico in Limbo While Pipeline Projects Plows Ahead*, Inside Climate News (Mar. 7, 2024), https://insideclimatenews.org/news/07032024/mexico-lng-exports-in-limbo/.

²⁸ Martha Pskowski, *LNG Exports From Mexico in Limbo While Pipeline Projects Plows Ahead*, Inside Climate News (Mar. 7, 2024), https://insideclimatenews.org/news/07032024/mexico-lng-exports-in-limbo/.

²⁹ Steven Haig et al., *Why Liquefied Natural Gas Expansion in Canada Is Not Worth The Risk*, International Institute for Sustainable Development (June 2024), https://www.iisd.org/system/files/2024-06/bottom-line-lng-expansion-canada-not-worth-risk.pdf.

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Your Allies Do Not Want LNG Exports

Every dollar invested in unnecessary, harmful, and expensive LNG infrastructure costs us double—first, by our failure to invest instead in secure, abundant, and cheap renewable energies, and second, by locking in higher greenhouse gas emissions, with attendant future climate damage.³⁰ Continued reliance on LNG means more harm to frontline communities and the environment from extracting, transporting, and shipping fossil gas around the world.³¹

At the U.N. climate change conference COP28 in Dubai, the world agreed to transition away from fossil fuels, while tripling global capacities for renewable power and doubling the annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030. Now is the time for governments to follow through on these promises. We can start by rejecting new U.S. LNG export permits because they are not in the U.S. public interest or necessary for the national or energy security of our allies.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and your important, ongoing work to address climate change and support clean, affordable, renewable, and reliable energy generation.

Sincerely,

UNDERSIGNED MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND PARLIAMENT

³⁰ Kevin Rennert et al., *Comprehensive evidence implies a higher social cost of CO2*, Nature 610, 687-92 (2022), https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-022-05224-9.

³¹ *Id.*

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Lisa Badum Member of the German Parliament

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

Rashida Tlaib Member of Congress Eleanor Holmes Norton Member of Congress

Pramila Jayapal Member of Congress

Bernard Sanders United States Senator

Jan Schakowsky Member of Congress

Jared Huffman Member of Congress

Monique Ryan

Member of the Australian Parliament

Lukas Hammer

Member of the Austrian Parliament

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Member of UK Parliament

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Canadian Senator for Québec

Page **9** of **14** <u>/s</u> Petra De Sutter <u>/s</u> Sahr Charles Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium Former Member of Sierra Leone Parliament /s_____ Johan Malcorps Former Member of the Flemish Parliament /s_____Lidia Norberta dos Santos Martins <u>/s</u> Ralph Regenvanu Member of Parliament, Special Envoy on Climate Member of the Timor-Leste Parliament Change and Environment for the Republic of Vanuatu /s Rebecca Yei Kamara <u>/s</u>
Cassy O'Connor MLC Member of Tasmania's Legislative Council Member of Sierra Leone Parliament Agho Oliver Bamenju
Member of the Cameroon National Assembly /s Dr. Sokhun Ty Member of the Cambodian Parliament /s Thomas Waitz <u>/s</u> Juan Carlos Lozada Member of the European Parliament from Austria Member of the Colombian Congress /s Mounir Satouri Sara Matthieu Member of the European Parliament from Member of the European Parliament from Belgium France /<u>s</u> Majdouline Sbaï <u>/s</u> Rasmus Andresen Member of the European Parliament from Member of the European Parliament from France Germany /s Michael Bloss <u>/s</u> Katrin Langensiepen Member of the European Parliament from Member of the European Parliament from

Germany

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<u>/s</u>	<u>/s</u>
Maggie Chapman	Lamin J Sanneh
Member of the Scottish Parliament	Member of the National Assembly of the Gambia
<u>/s</u>	/s
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Member of the South Sudan Parliament	Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly
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	Peter Lomude
Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly	Member of the South Sudan Parliament
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Peter Lomude	Elin Söderberg
Member of the South Sudan Parliament	Member of the Swedish Parliament
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Elin Söderberg	<u>/s</u> Maggie Chapman
Member of the Swedish Parliament	Member of the Scottish Parliament
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	Thea Ntara
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Member of the Thailand Parliament	Member of the Thailand Parliament

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<u>/s</u> Prasertpong Sornnuvatara	/ <u>s</u>
Prasertpong Sornnuvatara	/s Romadon Panjor
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<u>/s</u>	<u>/s</u>
Chonthicha Jangrew	Karoonpon Tieansuwan
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<u>/s</u> Bhutin Noumjerm	<u>/s</u> Chulapong Yukate
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/s	/s
<u>/s</u> Lawrence Biyka Songa	<u>/s</u> Chollathanee Chueanoi
Member of the Ugandan Parliament	Member of the Thailand Parliament
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<u>/s</u> Lidia Thorpe	<u>/s</u> Apisit Laistrooglai
Australian Senator for Victoria	Member of the Thailand Parliament
<u>/s</u>	<u>/s</u>
Lívia Duarte	Natalie Bennett
Brazilian State Deputy for Pará	Member of the UK House of Lords
<u>/s</u>	<u>/s</u>
Ellie Chowns	Wera Hobhouse
Member of UK Parliament	Member of UK Parliament
<u>/s</u> Celia Xakriabá	<u>/s</u>
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<u>/s</u> Boris Mijatovic	<u>/s</u> Christina-Johanne Schröder
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/s	/s
<u>/s</u> Kassem Tahersaleh	<u>/s</u> Jaime Saez Quiroz
Member of the German Parliament	Member of the Chilean Chamber of Deputies
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Ellen Sandell Member of the Victorian Parliament in Australia	<u>/s</u> Tim Read Member of the Victorian Parliament in Australia
Gabrielle Di Vietri Member of the Victorian Parliament in Australia	<u>/s</u> Sam Hibbins Member of the Victorian Parliament in Australia
/s	/s Kat Copsey Member of the Victorian Parliament in Australia
/sAiv Puglielli Member of the Victorian Parliament in Australia	

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