

United States Senate

May 22, 2020

The Honorable Neil Chatterjee
Chairman
U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Chairman Chatterjee,

As the United States continues to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and begins to focus on the long-term recovery of our nation, we want to applaud the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for continuing to process applications to improve America's energy infrastructure and for rejecting partisan requests to halt review of new natural gas pipeline projects and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) export facilities.

FERC's April 2, 2020 announcement providing for business continuity with regard to energy infrastructure was an important first step. We commend the commission and its staff for granting short-term waivers to ensure FERC operations are able to continue in a safe manner, while remaining attentive to jurisdictional needs and adhering to social distancing guidance. During this pandemic FERC has demonstrated the ability to continue operations while taking steps to maintain public involvement, despite protests to the contrary.

The April 15, 2020 letter sent by 29 House Democrats and the May 7, 2020 letter sent by attorneys general from 10 states and the District of Columbia requesting FERC declare a moratorium on the approval and construction of gas-pipeline projects and LNG export facilities are part of a continued effort to shut down energy development from sources opposed by Green New Deal enthusiasts and their political allies. This same group of politicians and activists are pressuring financial institutions and lenders to violate their fiduciary duties to their clients and limit energy producers' access to capital.

As you well know, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted nearly every corner of the country, including the energy sector. A drop in global demand has had profound implications on oil and gas extraction, projected capital spending, and the energy industry's workforce. Slowing the approval process and delaying construction at a time when millions of Americans are out of work is profoundly wrong. Each project employs thousands of people, generates tax revenue for states and localities, and contributes billions of dollars in capital expenditures to the economy. Now is not the time to take advantage of a pandemic for political gain. The levers of government should be used to restore America's energy independence and security, and to grow the economy out of the crisis.


To that end, FERC should evaluate opportunities to reduce the regulatory burden on infrastructure projects. Not only is it important for our national security to restore our position as a net exporter, but LNG has proven to be a reliable, affordable and clean form of energy. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, natural gas supplies more than one-third of all energy used nationwide and contributed to a reduction in carbon emissions. Some estimates show our nation has a 100-year supply of natural gas to meet growing energy needs.

Instead of using a global health pandemic to shut down an industry and score political points, we hope that political leadership at both the state and federal level can come together and find long-term, commonsense solutions to help workers, families, and small business owners grow their way out of this crisis.


Sincerely,



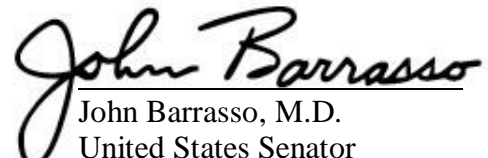
Ted Cruz
United States Senator



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



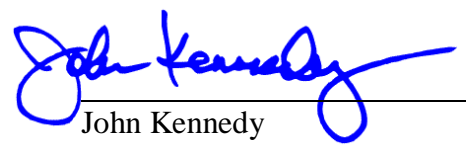
James M. Inhofe
United States Senator



John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



John Kennedy
United States Senator

Cc: Commissioner Richard Glick, U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Commissioner Bernard L. McNamee, U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Commissioner James Danly, U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission