

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

Re: 2024 LNG Export Study: Energy, Economic, and Environmental Assessment of U.S. LNG Exports

Dear Secretary Wright,

As retired senior military leaders, we are writing to applaud the Department of Energy's (DOE) recent analysis assessing LNG exports. The analysis' clear findings that unfettered LNG exports raise costs for American families, threaten the health of communities, and exacerbate the climate crisis are aligned with concerns previously expressed by frontline leaders and other advocates - including the signers of this letter. Moreover, these risks are multiplied by serious national security concerns we articulated in a letter to Congressional leadership in 2024. That is why we are eager to file this comment during the DOE's comment period on its recent analysis with our conclusion that continuing to authorize more LNG export permits will needlessly put Americans in harm's way by accelerating the climate crisis, raising energy prices at home, and weakening our national security.

Shortly after Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine, U.S. LNG was increasingly exported to our allies in Europe to help them respond and meet the need created by the cut-off of Russian gas. While once a strategic asset in this conflict, reports have since signaled that gas demand is falling - with LNG terminals becoming underutilized and import projects being delayed and canceled, as some countries realize that more infrastructure is unnecessary and renewables are displacing the need for gas. As a result, U.S. LNG exports are increasingly going elsewhere to nations like China - now the top buyer of LNG around the world, with the U.S. being the top supplier.

Contrary to what certain elected officials and industry executives falsely claim, unlimited LNG exports are not a national security asset but are instead a growing threat. The rapid and reckless export buildout from the oil and gas industry has resulted in American-produced energy being exported to companies affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party. These companies can then leverage these US resources to build the influence of the Chinese government around the world, undermining the strategic value U.S. LNG once served and instead turning it into a geopolitical liability. Moreover, according to a report from the American Security Project (ASP) - an organization founded by fellow veterans John Kerry and Chuck Hagel - LNG exports to China allow them to grow their own long-term renewable energy sources, strengthen their energy independence, and grow their own geopolitical

advantage, all while Americans foot the bill and bear the brunt of the pollution from LNG facilities.

The risks of unfettered LNG exports do not stop there. When considering our nation's security, one must examine what is right in front of them: entire cities wiped out by wildfires and hurricanes, water sources becoming scarce, food systems disrupted by extreme weather, and air becoming unbreathable. At home and abroad, these climate-fuelled changes drive resource shortages, migration, instability, and conflict. The climate crisis is here, and it has affected every aspect of our lives. Our decisions today could either begin to remedy the damage already made, or send us further into climate chaos.

As the Department of Defense has repeatedly articulated, climate change is a major national security concern. Stopping new LNG exports is one way the government can reduce harmful emissions that fire this crisis. According to a peer-reviewed analysis by Robert Howarth, LNG's greenhouse gas footprint is 33% greater than coal. Additionally, the emissions impact of all the LNG export projects, in operation, under construction, permitted, and planned is the equivalent of nearly 700 new coal-fired power plants. A major component of a successful climate action and national security strategy must be preventing projects that would lock us into decades of fossil fuel dependency from moving forward.

Moreover, communities along the Gulf Coast are already experiencing the effects of the buildout of LNG export facilities. A recent analysis by the Sierra Club and Greenpeace USA found that air pollution from both operating and planned LNG terminals could result in hundreds of premature deaths and billions in public health costs. Additionally, the Bullard Center for Environmental Justice found that LNG export facilities in the Gulf South add to the environmental burdens fenceline communities bear from decades of oil and gas development, where the dominating presence of this industry has created sacrifice zones. These vulnerable communities do not reap the gains from the industry operating in their neighborhoods-tax incentives go to fossil fuel companies instead of investing in education or other public services.

The DOE's powerful analysis should be a start, not a finish, of any Administration's efforts to tackle national security, economic, and climate concerns. Doubling down on fossil fuels and ignoring the findings of the DOE's study by approving new LNG exports will only worsen the disastrous effects of climate change that the world is already experiencing and increase instability across the globe. Hundreds of thousands of Americans - including veterans like ourselves, consumer advocates, frontline communities, and doctors and nurses - have already raised their voices in agreement urging the Biden Administration to stop the unchecked expansion of LNG exports while they can.

We deserve to live in a country where our elected officials are committed to using our resources for good and protecting us from harm. President Biden took a step in this direction by pausing new LNG export approvals and ordering the Department of Energy to release this analysis. However, the clear next step is to use this analysis to deny all pending permits currently in front of the DOE. Moreover, it is vital that the DOE use the findings of this

analysis to determine whether future proposed LNG export authorizations are in the public interest.

At the end of the day, we all want clean air and water, affordable energy, and a safe and secure nation. Americans shouldn't have to pay the costs for the buildout of unstable, volatile energy just to help the oil and gas industry and our rivals build power.

As veterans, we fought to protect our country, and we will continue this duty by calling out threats to our nation's security. The government must take action to prioritize its citizen's health and safety over polluting industries by limiting new LNG exports.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Major General (Ret) Paul Eaton, USA

Major General (Ret) Gale S. Pollock, USA, CRNA, FACHE, FAN

Brigadier General (Ret) Mark O'Neill, USA

Sergeant Major (Ret) Marshall Williams, USA