

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 2, 2022

The Honorable Joseph Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has laid bare a broken U.S. energy policy. It is time to change course and return America to its dominant role in global energy.

It is no secret that we have been opposed to the approach you have taken towards American energy production. Your administration's focus on ending the production and use of traditional sources of American energy has contributed to soaring inflation. It also has left the U.S. and our allies vulnerable to the malicious maneuverings of Vladimir Putin. It is astonishing that while Putin's Russia was poised to gobble up Ukraine, your climate envoy, John Kerry, was saying, "I hope President Putin will help us to stay on track with respect to what we need to do for the climate."

You set the tone on your very first day in office by killing the Keystone XL pipeline. That sent an unmistakably strong signal to markets that your administration will oppose investments in U.S. oil and natural gas projects. The Keystone decision and others you and your administration have made continue to aggravate market uncertainty and contribute to the underinvestment we have seen in the oil and gas sector. The resulting rise in energy costs and inflation have hurt American families and our economy. Those decisions have also weakened our ability to address the immediate crisis in Ukraine and support our North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies.

Giving Putin's Nord Stream 2 pipeline the green light was another blunder. Our policy should be to make Europe less reliant on Russian energy, not more. American energy should be part of that diversification effort, but your administration has made that ever more difficult.

It is time for your administration to develop a new approach that embraces America's energy abundance. American-produced energy is not just good for our economy and international competitiveness. Making America energy dominant will increase our nation's and our allies' security.

Mr. President, releasing crude oil from the Strategic Oil Reserve or offering a gasoline tax "holiday," as some have suggested, would do precious little in the short run and nothing in the

long run. What is needed is an approach that will help us get through this energy crisis and equip us to prevent future energy crises.

Here are 10 things we can do that will help spur greater American energy production, blunt Russia and China's energy-fueled geopolitical ambitions, and restore America's dominant role in global energy:

- Instruct the Department of the Interior to hold new oil and natural gas lease sales on federal lands and waters. There has not been one lease sale on federal lands since you imposed a ban in violation of federal law. No other major oil-producing nation shuts off its own reserves to production. Neither should the United States.
- Instruct the Securities and Exchange Commission to halt a planned rule to enhance "environmental, social, and governance" disclosures. These are sure to depress equity valuations and raise the cost of debt financing, which will make it more difficult for energy companies to raise capital and produce American energy. The consequence will be more inflation.
- Expedite the approval of liquefied natural gas exports to our NATO allies and other strategic partners where it would promote the national security interests of the United States. Diversifying supplies of this fuel to our allies will make them, and us, more secure.
- Remove restrictions on international financing of natural gas and coal power plants. Expanding access to secure, reliable, and affordable energy needed for development is in America's geostrategic interest. For most countries, that means natural gas and coal. Relinquishing U.S. support for these kinds of projects will drive developing countries to pursue projects with partners like China, to our detriment.
- Instruct the Department of Energy to begin purchases of domestically-produced uranium for a strategic uranium reserve. More than 90 percent of the uranium we use is imported. Nearly half of the uranium we import comes from Russia and its allies. Nuclear power is the largest source of emissions-free energy. Maintaining a secure supply of uranium should be a priority.
- Reform and streamline siting and regulations that needlessly delay, if not stop entirely, vital energy infrastructure projects. It should not take years for federal agencies to approve projects under the National Environmental Policy Act.
- Encourage the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission not to erect new barriers for natural gas pipeline approvals. Making more U.S. natural gas available to American consumers will reduce costs at home and increase the security of our electric grid.

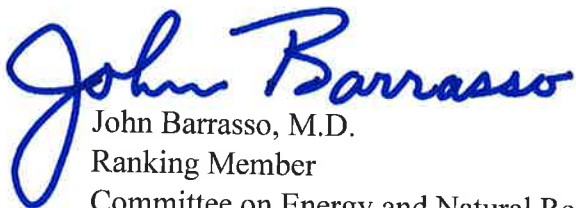
Making more American natural gas available to Europe, which you have endorsed, cannot happen absent additional infrastructure.

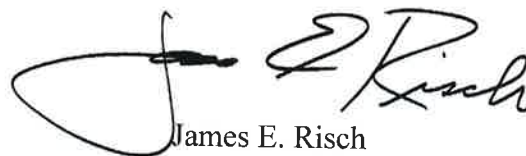
- Withdraw your executive order cancelling the Keystone XL pipeline and approve existing and future cross-border oil and gas permits. Canada is the largest source of U.S. crude imports and an important friend and ally. Supporting energy trade with Canada will send the right signal to investors that America is open for business once again.
- Work with our European partners on developing the continent's shale resources. In addition to diversifying supplies of energy, Europe needs to do a better job of developing its own significant shale resources. Putin has been financing anti-fracking campaigns throughout Europe. They have worked. We need to dispel Russian-funded myths about this American technology.
- Expedite the approval of domestic mines, including mines on federal lands, which would produce critical minerals and other import materials such as copper for which there is growing demand. The supply chains of many of these materials are dominated by China and Russia and often tainted by human rights abuses.

Last month, before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, you said you would "work like the devil" to protect American families and businesses from rising energy prices and inflation. We believe it is in America's national interest, however, that you work like the moderate president you claim to be, reach across the aisle, and pursue with us the sensible and critical steps outlined above.

Mr. President, America is the world's energy superpower. It is time we started acting like it again.

Sincerely,

  
John Barrasso, M.D.  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

  
James E. Risch  
United States Senator

  
Mike Lee  
United States Senator

  
Steve Daines  
United States Senator



Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator



John Hoeven  
United States Senator



James Lankford  
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
United States Senator



Cindy Hyde-Smith  
United States Senator



Roger Marshall, M.D.  
United States Senator



Cynthia Lummis  
United States Senator