

**EXPOSING THE TRUTH ON LNG:
HOW THE ADMINISTRATION PLAYED
POLITICS WITH AMERICA'S
ENERGY FUTURE**

HEARING

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY
POLICY, AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
OF THE

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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C O N T E N T S

	Page
Hearing held on December 4, 2024	1

WITNESSES

Brad Crabtree, Assistant Secretary, Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management, U.S. Department of Energy Oral Statement	5
John Podesta, Senior Advisor to the President for International Climate Policy, The White House (Invited)	0

Opening statements and the prepared statements for the witnesses are available in the U.S. House of Representatives Repository at: docs.house.gov.

INDEX OF DOCUMENTS

- * Article, *Reuters*, “Biden’s Oil Boom”; submitted by Rep. Stansbury.
- * Article, *Free Beacon*, “Podesta Behind Biden’s Decision To Pause Natural Gas Exports”; submitted by Rep. Fallon.
- * Report, ACS, “Improved Greenhouse Gas Emission Estimates of LNG Exports through Enhanced Supply Chain Resolution”; submitted by Rep. Fallon.

The documents listed above are available at: docs.house.gov.

**EXPOSING THE TRUTH ON LNG:
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ENERGY FUTURE**

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY
POLICY, AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
Washington, D.C.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m., in room 2247, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Pat Fallon [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Fallon, Perry, Boebert, Fry, Brown, Stansbury, and Norton.

Also present: Representatives Higgins and Pfluger.

Mr. FALLON. This hearing of the Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Energy Policy, and Regulatory Affairs will come to order. I want to welcome everyone for joining us.

Without objection, the Chair may declare a recess at any time.

I recognize myself for the purpose of making an opening statement.

Today we are here, once again, to examine the Biden-Harris Administration's decision to effectively ban liquefied natural gas, or LNG, exports to non-free trade agreement countries.

On January 26 this year, the Administration announced that it would be pausing pending decisions on export permitting for LNG to non-FTA countries. This surprise decision was yet another example of this Administration's efforts to kill American independence and American energy independence. Let us make no mistake about it, this is an effective ban. One person's ban is another person's pause. But this Committee has been conducting oversight to understand what led to the Administration's decision.

Unfortunately, the Administration has refused to be transparent. On April 18 of this year, the Subcommittee held a hearing with Assistant Secretary Brad Crabtree. At our hearing, Mr. Crabtree testified that the new department analysis to evaluate whether additional exports were in the public interest was, and I quote, well underway, unquote.

A few weeks later, on May 23, Secretary Granholm appeared before our Full Committee. The Secretary assured the Committee that the study would be completed and the ban would be lifted during the first quarter of 2025. Since the ban was instituted, energy companies investing in new LNG export projects have struggled to navigate an uncertain future, because what they are looking for, as any business is looking for, is certainty and stability so they can invest and create, incidentally, high-paying American jobs.

The holding pattern imposed by the ban has led to a significant number of project delays, high regulatory and legal costs, and a great deal of uncertainty for the workforces and the communities supporting these large scale, capital-intensive projects. Research by the National Association of Manufacturers found that nearly one million jobs would be in jeopardy over the next two decades should the ban remain the place.

So, how did we get here? And who was really responsible for the decision? The motivations appear to be entirely political, and that is very unfortunate. Reports indicate that, before the ban, the White House met with activists and TikTok influencers—not making that up—who were adamant that the Administration take radical steps to address climate change and eliminate fossil fuels.

John Podesta, the Senior Advisor to the President for International Climate Policy, engaged in these meetings, calling into question what information the Administration relied upon to impose the export ban and risk the ban's significant economic and national security implications.

Ongoing FOIA litigation led to an organization called Government Accountability and Oversight sought to uncover information supplied to the Department of Energy headquarters before the January 1924 decision. And as it turns out, there may have already been a 2023 study in existence that the Department kept under wraps and is still fighting to withhold.

It appears possible that when the information the Department had did not fit the narrative pushed by the White House, that information was buried in an attempt to clear the way for a more politically favorable analysis. This Administration has been steadfast in its efforts to cripple American independence. And hiding inconvenient facts from the public to support radical activists is yet another example of these efforts.

The U.S. LNG exports are crucial, not only to American independence, but also amidst the fragile geopolitical environment. From the Israel-Hamas war to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, to the growing threats posed by an ever-aggressive China, countries across the world have heightened awareness of their own energy reliance. The U.S. plays a significant role in helping these countries meet their future energy demand.

Withholding our LNG potential simply to appease climate extremists fails, not only to help our allies, it does not help our citizens here at home either and who, incidentally, work tirelessly to keep the power on, not only in this country but around the world.

The incoming Trump Administration should reverse course on these short-sighted actions and usher in a new era of U.S. energy leadership. Reports show that President-elect Trump plans to lift the Biden-Harris LNG export ban and increase American energy

production early in his Administration. I am concerned, however, about the reports that the Biden-Harris administration is rushing to complete its final study and skew the record before the incoming Trump Administration can undo the damage already done.

I want to thank Mr. Crabtree for appearing to testify here today. Senior Advisor to the President John Podesta declined to participate in today's hearing despite our invitation. And there is a chair for him. If he is watching, he is welcome to come any time. We would love to have him. This is unfortunate that—his absence—considering the many questions that this Committee believes he could help answer.

I urge the White House to preserve their records and ensure them that we will be obtaining the information we seek one way or another, particularly after the 20th of January.

I now recognize the Ranking Member for purposes of making an opening statement.

Ms. STANSBURY. All right. Well, good afternoon, everyone. I am grateful for the opportunity to be here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to our Assistant Secretary for being here with us today.

As was mentioned, this is a rehash of a topic that we have already covered in this Subcommittee and, in fact, we have already had two hearings on gas stoves, two hearings on how the government has forced electric vehicles, and now a second hearing on this 1-year pause reviewing applications for LNG exports.

And this is a politically manufactured nonissue. This is actually not a ban. This is about using the best available economic analysis and science to understand how LNG exports affect American consumer markets, how they affect the price of oil and gas here in the United States, how they affect prices for consumers here in the United States. And in light of supply and demand issues, especially with foreign wars, with constraints on gas exports in other countries, and other impacts including climate change and social justice and environmental impacts, what the implications are for expanding our capacity.

I think any good business would want a good, sound economic analysis. And if the United States is a business, as we know it is, it is in the business of making sure that the American taxpayers get a good return on any investment that we make or any sale that we get from American resources, then it is who of us to do our due diligence to make sure that the energy that is being produced here in the United States, the infrastructure that the United States is investing in and the places in which that infrastructure goes, does not have an undue impact on our economy, on American families, on oil and gas prices, and on the environment and the global climate crisis. And that is really what this all comes down to.

So, this is about modernizing and understanding the state of play, especially after we have come out of a historic pandemic and global disturbances in international gas markets and to understand what is going on, which seems pretty reasonable. But oftentimes, you know, in this Committee, things get spun in a way that sounds like there is some vast conspiracy theory. And I think it is important to just be real with the American people. You know, we are literally 2 weeks out from adjourning for the holidays.

On January 20 we will have a new Administration. They have made very clear—it was just stated in the opening statement—that their intention is to vastly expand LNG exports. And that has nothing to do with American energy security. That has everything to do with expanding opportunities to sell American oil and gas overseas so that American companies can profit from the pumping that they are doing here in the United States.

We are energy secure. And, in fact, as somebody who also comes from an oil and gas state, we have amongst the highest oil and gas pumping that we have ever seen in American history right now, in fact just in our backyard. So, this is not about energy security.

And, you know, before I came to Congress, I was actually a staffer on the Senate Energy Committee, and I marveled often as a staffer when we would see these industry-led hearings come before the Committee and you always wonder, what are the conversations that were had with industry before they decided to hold hearings like this. Because it is clearly in the service of creating a Congressional Record so that when the Trump Administration comes in, there is some legal and possibly congressional teeth to whatever fight these private companies are hoping to take on.

So, I think it is important to be clear-eyed about what this hearing actually is and pull back the curtain a little bit and to also be clear about what it is that we are actually talking about. This is not a ban. The Department of Energy is updating their data and analysis, working with experts from our national laboratories, and it is an important part of the process for looking at additional permit applications and this is just part of doing business and being a responsible business.

And so, this is a bit of a witch hunt, especially in the final days of this Congress and of the Administration. I think it is really important that we have the Assistant Secretary here today to talk about what the Biden Administration has done to address American energy security. And, in fact, we have amongst the highest energy security we have ever had in American history and, you know, prices are going down, manufacturing is going up, jobs are going up. And we are having a renaissance here in the United States in domestic production in manufacturing.

And so, I think it would be a dang shame to see it get dismantled in the coming months, because we know that it is stimulating economic opportunity, it is creating thousands of jobs, it is helping millions of Americans, it is bringing down costs. And this is really about trying to pump up profits for private corporations, not about caring for the people of this country.

So, I look forward to hearing from the Assistant Secretary. I applaud the Department of Energy's efforts to create a fact-based policy document that we can use to help plan for our industry exports and to understand the economic and environmental implications of what we do as we are, as a country, figuring out how we want to handle this industry and its implications.

So, with that, I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you.

Today we are joined by Mr. Brad Crabtree who serves as the Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Fossil Fuel and Carbon Management.

Mr. Crabtree previously testified before this Subcommittee in April of this year. We also invited the Senior Advisor to the President for International Climate Policy, John Podesta, who declined the Committee's invitation to participate.

I want to thank you, Mr. Crabtree, for your willingness to join us here today. As you can see, we only have 50 percent success rate. So, I am glad you are here.

Without objection, Representative Higgins of Louisiana and Representative Pfluger from Texas are waived on to the Subcommittee for the purpose of questioning the witness at today's hearing.

Pursuant to Committee rule 9(g), the witness will please stand and raise his right hand.

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. CRABTREE. I do.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you. You may sit.

Let the record show that the witness answered in the affirmative.

We appreciate, sir, you being here today and look forward to hearing your testimony. Let me remind the witness that we have read your written statement; it will appear in full in the hearing record. Please limit your oral comments to 5 minutes.

As a reminder, please press the button, you know the drill. And 4 minutes of green, 1 minute of yellow, and then red, if you could wrap it up.

I now recognize Mr. Crabtree for his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF BRAD CRABTREE
OFFICE OF FOSSIL ENERGY AND CARBON MANAGEMENT
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

Mr. CRABTREE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, it is good to see you again. And, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Stansbury, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and to testify before the Subcommittee.

I look forward to discussing the Department of Energy's updates to the analyses that underpin our decisions on exports—on applications to export liquefied natural gas to non-free trade agreement countries.

Let me begin by emphasizing that there has never been a ban on LNG exports. The U.S. is the No. 1 exporter of LNG worldwide and of natural gas, and DOE has authorized every operating project, every project under construction, and a number of additional projects to export U.S. natural gas as LNG to those countries with which we do not have a free trade agreement.

Current exports reached a new high this year, averaging over 12 billion cubic feet per day, and exports are expected to reach 14 billion cubic feet per day next year as new projects come online. Once all authorized projects currently under construction do come online, our export capacity is set to reach over 26 billion cubic feet per day. That is more than double our current export level. What this means is that by just 2030, half a decade, U.S. export capacity will exceed any other country by over 40 percent, and that takes all announced global capacity additions in other countries into account.

Our total level of non-FTA exports already authorized goes well beyond these numbers; another 22 billion cubic feet of export capacity authorized but not yet having reached the financial investment decision. In short, the program I lead has authorized over 48 billion cubic feet in exports to non-FTA countries, four times our actual current LNG export levels and nearly 45 percent of our current domestic natural gas production. By any measure, our export posture is strong and will grow dramatically during the remainder of this decade regardless of future export approvals.

With that context in mind, DOE needs to fully understand how additional authorized exports could impact our economy, community, energy prices for domestic consumers and manufacturers, international partners, and the environment.

To that end, earlier this year, DOE announced that we are undertaking review of the economic and environmental analyses, again, that underpin our public interest determinations. We also announced that we would pause final authorizations pending applications while we conducted the review.

In 2011 and 2012, DOE commissioned two studies to examine the domestic economic impact of U.S. LNG exports. In December 2012, DOE published the first two economic studies. During that update, as with this one, DOE temporarily deferred its review of all pending non-FTA applications. Beginning in 2014, DOE undertook studies to evaluate the environmental impacts associated with LNG exports because the existing analysis did not account for the latest scientific understanding of the impact of greenhouse gas emissions.

The most recent economic study published in 2018 considered the total volume of non-FTA exports authorized at that time equivalent to 21.35 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day and the additional volume of LNG requested for export in the then pending applications. DOE provided notice of each of these studies in the Federal Register and solicited public comment. This associated public comment process has been a valuable part of our decision-making ever since.

I would note that one key difference between those reviews and the current update is we have seen the pivotal role U.S. LNG plays in safeguarding global energy security. We have also seen periods during which U.S. LNG exports had a noticeable influence on domestic prices, especially when demand outpaced supply following the post-COVID economic recovery. And we are seeing how LNG exports affect communities near liquefaction sites in both positive and negative ways.

Finally, over the past several years, we have learned a lot more about greenhouse gas emissions from the natural gas supply chain and what actions can and should be taken to mitigate them.

The forthcoming update of our economic and environmental analysis is both robust and comprehensive. And we expect to release the final study at the middle of—by mid-December for a 60-day public comment period.

Mr. Chairman, DOE is proud of its strong record of relying on the most up to date and robust data and analyses when making our public interest determinations. Without these updated analyses, applicants whose non-FTA export applications are approved by DOE could face likely legal challenges alleging that DOE im-

properly relied on outdated analysis in making its public interest determinations. This update underway ensures that DOE will rely on the most up to date and robust data and analyses to the benefit, not only of U.S. consumers and the Nation's economic competitiveness, but also to the applicants themselves who are seeking non-FTA export authorizations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes for questions.

I think it is unfortunate that Mr. Podesta has declined our invitation to appear before the Subcommittee today. These are questions that I would have asked him. I would have asked him how many times did he meet with TikTok influencers on climate issues leading up to or following the announcement of the LNG export ban. I would have asked him if the White House was relying on TikTok influencers for policy advice when it pushed the LNG ban on the DOE. I would like to know, did the White House vet individuals and activists from organizations that it spoke to about the LNG ban? Did they vet them for foreign influence or sponsorship? Did the Biden-Harris Administration make the decision to institute the ban on the LNG exports in order to appease climate activists or in response to foreign influence or other conflicts of interest?

It is also concerning that Mr. Podesta's brother, Tony, is known to have lobbied for foreign LNG companies, including one co-owned by Qatar state-run energy company. For the past 11 months since the announcement of the pause, Qatar has secured long-term LNG export contracts, invested in export infrastructure, and increased capacity, while the United States falls behind competitively.

I would also like to enter into the record an article by the *Washington Free Beacon* detailing these findings.

Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. FALLON. So, do these represent a significant conflict of interest? I think the American people have a right to know. And we do not know if we cannot have those questions answered. It is unfortunate. And I had to burn 2 of my minutes asking questions I knew I was not going to get answers to.

But we do have a witness that is here today, Mr. Crabtree, and I want to thank you for showing up.

And, Mr. Crabtree, as you know, the Committee sent a letter to your department on the 23rd of October, this year, requesting information regarding a potential draft study of LNG exports that was completed in 2023. Are you familiar with the study, and what can you share about any analysis that was done prior to the decision to pause?

Mr. CRABTREE. I am not aware, sir. I have not been presented with the document, so I am not aware of what you are referring to. What I can say about the process we have undertaken is the discussions of potentially updating the analyses began—were occurring at the staff level when I joined the Administration. And by early 2023, we were having discussions about updating the analysis. And work began at that time, and there are many facets to this analysis. Each of them involves modeling. Each of them has a qualitative and quantitative analytical component.

And so, I imagine what you are referring to is early documentation—

Mr. FALLON. OK.

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. Of that sort, but a complete study did not exist in 2023—

Mr. FALLON. OK. Did the White House, via Mr. Podesta or anyone else, ever advise or suggest to you or anyone on your team about outcomes—on what outcomes the final study or any prior study needed to support?

Mr. CRABTREE. No. I had no interaction that I recall with the White House.

Mr. FALLON. Have you ever had any pushback on any directives given by the White House as it relates to the future of U.S. LNG exports?

Mr. CRABTREE. No.

Mr. FALLON. OK. See, what I think it is very important for our folks to understand is these FTA countries, we only have agreements with 20. And there are roughly 195 countries in the world, so 175 countries are not part of the FTA. So, when you have a ban or a pause, it greatly impacts our ability, not only to keep high-paying American jobs, but also securing our—the energy security of our allies.

I had two different European allies come into our office begging us to have the President lift this, whatever you want to call it, the ban or pause, and ostensibly were in our office for different reasons.

Mr. Crabtree, how many permits—because, you know, Democrats on the Committee are claiming this was a pause and not a ban. So, how many permits have been issued since January 26, 2024, to non-FTA countries?

Mr. CRABTREE. We have issued a permit to—the New Fortress Energy Altamira project was issued in August.

Mr. FALLON. OK. So, the answer to that question would be one?

Mr. CRABTREE. One.

Mr. FALLON. One in a year. And did they apply for a 5-year or a 20-year lease?

Mr. CRABTREE. Applied for a 20-year.

Mr. FALLON. OK. Were they granted the 20-year lease?

Mr. CRABTREE. No. We granted them a 5-year, because until we update our analysis, we need to build a substantiate that that standard—

Mr. FALLON. But you could do both. You could be doing a study and also having an American company export a vital resource. Because they are either going to get it from New Mexico or Texas or some other state in our Union or they are going to get it from Moscow. I would far rather have them get it from us.

Mr. CRABTREE. Just as the DOE did in 2012, we chose to pause our consideration of applications.

Mr. FALLON. Well, I know you did, and I think that was misguided. I think it was a big mistake.

Now, this company that you issued the 5-year and not the 20-year permit to, there was also an inclusion where they could not just ask for—after 5 years, they could not ask for an extension, they had to wait 2 years. Is that correct?

Mr. CRABTREE. That is correct.

Mr. FALLON. I think that is just a very short-sighted and misguided policy.

Thank you again for coming, though. I yield to the Ranking Member for 5 minutes of questions.

I yield to our friend, Ms. Brown from Ohio, for her 5 minutes of questions.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Biden-Harris Administration has lived up to its promise to strengthen American energy independence like never before, while simultaneously combating climate change. As we have discussed in previous hearings in this Subcommittee, in 2023, the United States achieved its highest level of energy production ever. This is a remarkable achievement, especially after a global pandemic and Russia's war in Ukraine. In fact, the 4 years of Biden-Harris Administration will mark 4 consecutive years of liquid natural gas production increases.

The Administration's efforts have solidified the United States as the world's No. 1 LNG exporter. And LNG exports are expected to continue increasing through the end of the decade. So, Assistant Secretary Crabtree, thank you for joining us, again.

I know we have discussed much of this before, but it is worth re-emphasizing, since my colleagues on the other side of the aisle often overlook the success of the Biden-Harris Administration. First, is the United States still the world's largest exporter of liquid natural gas?

Mr. CRABTREE. Yes. And we will continue to be the largest exporter in 2030 based on current approvals and commitments by other countries.

Ms. BROWN. Thank you. And, Assistant Secretary Crabtree, can you walk us through how we as a country have gotten to this level of liquid natural gas production under the Biden-Harris Administration?

Mr. CRABTREE. Well, the significant approvals made by the Department of Energy for authorized exports, those projects have continued to come online. I mentioned at the outset we are currently exporting 12 billion cubic feet today, with additional capacity coming online. We anticipate 14 billion cubic feet next year. I would note that in 2018 or 2019, we were at about 3 to 4 billion cubic feet.

U.S. LNG exports exploded over a 10-year period. It is one of the most remarkable transformations in history in terms of energy. We started from a dead stop in 2015 to now being the largest exporter in the world, and we will be doubling those exports essentially by the end of the decade.

Ms. BROWN. And, you touched on this a little bit, how has the Department of Energy responded to the global crisis to ensure we have remained in this top spot and continue to supply LNG to our allies?

Mr. CRABTREE. Well, let me note that it takes many years to develop, permit, and finance an LNG project. And when we—when our office approves an authorization, we give that company 7 years to begin exports. And we know from the experience going back to the first projects in 2015 until now, these projects can take many

years. In fact, there are many projects that have failed to commence exports within 6 years of being authorized by our office, and many have sought actual extensions of that time period.

So, the key thing that is misunderstood and needs to be understood is our decisions have had no impact and will have no impact on the flow of natural gas, not over in future months but years because of all of the authorizations and the projects that are—have a financial—final investment decision and are under construction. U.S. supply will continue to grow. We now export—about 60 percent of our natural gas goes direct to our European partners and their need following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. And that is more than—about 2 1/2 times what Russia exports with pipelines and LNG. And it is roughly—nearly half of the European demand for natural gas is satisfied by U.S. LNG exports.

Ms. BROWN. And what does that mean for the average American?

Mr. CRABTREE. Well, what that means for the average American is that our country is playing a very important geostrategic role in supplying energy to Europe at a critical time and supporting our allies and their economic viability, and we are sending a U.S. export overseas which provides American jobs and strengthens our position as a country. And what we are doing with this update of our analysis is to make sure, having authorized, again, four times our current exports, we are now taking this step of—as the program has done in both the Trump Administration and in the Obama Administration—update the analysis so that any future decisions in authorizing exports incorporate the best science and the best understanding of what the domestic and international, economic, environmental, and other impacts will be.

Ms. BROWN. My time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes our friend from South Carolina, Mr. Fry.

Mr. FRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Assistant Secretary Crabtree, in ongoing FOIA litigation, the Department of Energy has identified approximately 97 documents related to the LNG export pause but has resisted releasing them. Why? What is the rationale for not releasing those documents?

Mr. CRABTREE. It is my understanding that our team that works on document production has been in cooperative engagement with the Committee. They committed to four document distributions, which have occurred so far. And the next one I understand is planned for Friday. My understanding is it is about 2,000 or so pages of documentation. I am not part of the process of documentation or FOIAs, and so I cannot speak to the details of that process. In my role, I have no involvement in it. But if you feel that the Department has not been responsive to the Committee, I am happy to take any specific concerns back to that team.

Mr. FRY. Will you commit to releasing those documents to this Committee? I mean, so we have done four, you are doing another one Friday, that is five out of, what, 97? Will you commit to releasing those documents?

Mr. CRABTREE. I will commit to meeting our obligations under document production. I am not part of the team that does that, and so—

Mr. FRY. Well, you prepared for this hearing today, did you not?

Mr. CRABTREE. I was invited to this hearing not to speak about document production but to present—

Mr. FRY. But you did—

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. The natural gas program and its export authorization.

Mr. FRY. Well, but your interactions with Congress and this particular committee requesting these documents, this probably came up in preparation, did it not?

Mr. CRABTREE. What I shared with you came up in preparation, but I am not—

Mr. FRY. OK. So—but there—

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. I am not going to speak to something I am not involved in.

Mr. FRY. Well, I understand that. But, like, there is no—if you prepared for this hearing today—you did not just wake up and waltz in here. I do not understand the rationale that you do not have anything to do with it, hands off, and now when we ask for these things, you are unable to answer the most basic questions about production of documents.

Mr. CRABTREE. Sir, there is another doc—we have undertaken four document productions and there is another one scheduled for Friday. I am happy to take very specific concerns back. I am not going to speak to something I do not have any involvement in.

Mr. FRY. Well, hopefully that happens. But as the Chairman indicated, we will get them one way or another.

Reports indicate the Department of Energy relied on a study by Robert Howarth, which has been discredited by The Breakthrough Institute for its flawed methodology. Why was such a contested study given weight in this decision to pause LNG exports?

Mr. CRABTREE. The work of Dr. Howarth played no role in the decision to undertake the update of our analyses. I have had—I do not know Mr. Howarth. My team has not interacted with him, nor have I. We have at the National Energy Technology Lab, which is part of the Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management that I represent, has the world-class recognized lifecycle analysis team. When we release the study mid-December, you will see that there is an entire component to the study on lifecycle analysis. It has a methodology. That methodology is completely different than the work of Mr. Howarth. I would note that there is a wide range of opinion in the lifecycle analysis academic community, very wide range.

Mr. FRY. Were other opinions taken into consideration?

Mr. CRABTREE. We take all opinions into consideration. We listen to the academic community, we hear from industry, we hear from scientific technical organizations, NGOs. My point is that Dr. Howarth's study played no role in our decision-making, and our methodology is entirely different.

Mr. FRY. OK. The pause obviously hindered LNG export, or the terminal development delayed infrastructure projects, jeopardized jobs in the energy sector. How does the Department of Energy justify these economic disruptions in light of the clear benefits of LNG exports to American workers and communities?

Mr. CRABTREE. I am very sorry. Can you repeat?

Mr. FRY. How does the Department of Energy justify the disruptions, the economic disruptions, in light of the clear benefits of LNG exports to the American workers and the communities?

Mr. CRABTREE. This will not surprise you that I do not agree with that assertion. The projects that are affected by the pause are seven. They are 5.6 billion cubic feet of capacity. We have authorized 48 billion cubic feet. If you talk to executives in the industry, they are struggling to find workers. They are struggling with EPC contracts. There is so much project development going on on the Gulf Coast that they cannot keep up. In the timeframe for the pause that we instituted is short enough that I just—I do not agree with that assertion that there has been disruption to the development of U.S. projects or certainly not—

Mr. FRY. I think others would have a difference of opinion.

Last question before my time wraps up. What steps is the Department of Energy taking to ensure that companies, domestic companies, can compete globally against nations like Qatar, Russia, which have capitalized on this pause that we have in this country?

Mr. CRABTREE. So, again, I do not agree that they capitalized on this pause. Qatar's major announcement to increase capacity was years in the making, sir. I have met with Minister Al Kaabi himself and his team; they are very strategic. These are multibillion dollar investments that—the decisions are made after years of work. So, the idea that Qatar would be so unsophisticated that they would make that sort of a commitment based on our temporary decision is just not credible.

Mr. FRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes our friend from the District of Columbia, Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Crabtree, my Republican colleagues have frequently mischaracterized the Department of Energy's actions regarding the brief pause on reviewing new liquefied natural gas export permit applications. The truth is actually so much simpler. The Biden-Harris Administration recognized significant changes in economic, global, national security, and environmental considerations for the liquefied natural gas industry. These changes prompted the need for an updated study to better inform decision-makers on new LNG permits.

Mr. Crabtree, can you give us a quick overview of the significant changes to the liquefied natural gas market that prompted a new study?

Mr. CRABTREE. Yes. Thank you for the question.

So, the changes are multiple. One is, again as I have already noted, the sheer scale of the growth of the industry here in the United States, from zero in 2015 to 12 billion cubic feet averaging this year and expected 14 billion cubic feet of exports, is unprecedented growth of an industry from a dead start.

And as far as our reasoning, so we want—as it has been noted by the Chairman that natural gas provides a very important role, and the Ranking Member as well, a very important role in our domestic economy. We are a major global manufacturer and indus-

trial producer in the world today. Natural gas at a low cost is of great benefit to our economy. We also have households which depend on natural gas for heating and electricity.

And so, we need to make sure that as we grow this—as this industry has grown, that we are making decisions about future exports. We have authorized over half of our domestic natural gas production for export. So, we want to make sure that, going forward, that we are, one, making sure that we are supplying our allies, which we are doing; and two, that we are making sure that we continue to maintain low prices and our domestic industrial competitiveness and also affordability for households.

When we were faced with the decision of whether to pause our applications and update our analysis, we were looking at incoming applications that would have put our authorizations for export at levels that had been higher than the DOE has ever even modeled. And so, this was an appropriate time for us to take a step back, when all this development is in the pipeline and happening on the Gulf Coast, to take a look at what would be the implications of even higher export levels from an economic, a jobs, a domestic crisis, environmental energy security, all those aspects, do a science-based technical analysis so that future decisions about yet additional exports, which are pending, could be made responsibly.

Ms. NORTON. Well, Mr. Crabtree, how will the new study lead to more informed decisions on new LNG permit applications, and how will that benefit Americans at large?

Mr. CRABTREE. Well, so first of all, the current economic analysis we are working with is 6 years old. And as I had mentioned, we were only exporting 3 to 4 billion cubic feet per day when that study was completed during the Trump Administration. And our latest environmental analysis is 5 years old. So, we will now have more up-to-date analysis about the economic effects of increased export levels and the environmental effects. And the environmental effects are not only greenhouse gas emissions, but upstream and downstream effects of natural gas production related to export on communities, for example.

Ms. NORTON. Well, Mr. Crabtree, will the new study also help LNG companies to have applications before the Department?

Mr. CRABTREE. Congressman

[sic], I appreciate that question because I think this is an important point that is getting lost.

In 2012, the Obama Administration undertook economic analysis of given levels of liquefied natural gas exports. When the Trump Administration approved, authorized exports, the Trump Administration relied on the Obama-era analysis. During the Biden Administration, in terms of the approvals that have been made by the Biden Administration, and the team that I oversee in our Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management, relied on the economic analysis from 2018 that was undertaken during the Trump Administration. So, there is a regular precedent of relying across administrations on the analysis of this program.

And I would note that—and this is really important—in 2017, the Sierra Club challenged four of our export authorizations. This was during the Trump Administration. And the D.C. court upheld those four authorizations, and it was in part based on the strength

of the economic and environmental analysis that our program has consistently undertaken.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes our good friend from Texas, Mr. Pfluger.

Mr. PFLUGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Appreciate the opportunity to waive on.

Mr. Crabtree, good to see you again. I will start by saying I think the American public spoke pretty loud and clear on November 5, so this is a great hearing, but we also have a mandate from the American public to actually unleash American energy and that was at the top of the ballot I believe in every state.

I want to get into some specifics, and I will start by saying, was any analysis conducted by the administration prior to the January 26 announcement, specifically between January 1, 2023, and October 31 of 2023? And how is it determined that is based on what specific factors and evidence that an updated study was actually needed?

Mr. CRABTREE. Yes, Congressman, good to see you again. Thank you for that question.

You were not here earlier; I explained that we actually began work on the update in the timeframe largely that you suggest. The discussions were actually going on with the career team when I was confirmed and started my work. Those discussions began in earnest in 2023.

The thing that I think has been misrepresented in some of the news coverage and comments that have been made is that the analysis is multifaceted. The labs we are working with and the team we have at DOE are working on—there is the domestic GDP and price impacts, there are environmental impacts, both greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts. There are a whole range of things that we are looking at. Each of those areas has its own modeling and its own quantitative and qualitative analysis.

So, in 2023, there were work products being developed that were not a complete study but that were part of the process that has been ongoing since then.

Mr. PFLUGER. Let me jump to that. Have the DOE leadership or anyone in the White House received the report's results, even if preliminary, of the export study conducted during those first 10 months that you are referring to? And did those reports conclude that there is no credible basis to restrict LNG exports? Is that what the initial report said, that there is no reason to restrict exports?

Mr. CRABTREE. No, that was not what those reports—

Mr. PFLUGER. So, they said we do—

Mr. CRABTREE. It was not a report.

Mr. PFLUGER [continuing]. But preliminary permission from the—

Mr. CRABTREE. Yes, you could not derive that conclusion from that work.

Mr. PFLUGER. OK. So, was there a conclusion derived that said to the President or the Administration that you should restrict LNG—

Mr. CRABTREE. No, nor was there—nor was there one that we should increase it. It was not definitive in that way.

Mr. PFLUGER. OK. Let me move to the White House involvement.

Mr. CRABTREE. Sir, I would say it is an iterative process, like most modeling analysis is. We agreed on assumptions as a team. We worked with our labs on an iterative basis. That is how DOE has done its analysis for years. And I just have to make this point: across Presidential administrations, DOE has been respected as one of the most significant scientific and technical organizations in the world. And when the study comes out mid-December, I think you will agree that this study is very consistent with that tradition.

Mr. PFLUGER. I think our problem and the reason that this hearing is probably being held today is because that science seems to have been departed from, especially when considering the public interest and whether or not it is in the public interest to export LNG when every country around the world is asking for it.

The Howarth study, you know—I know my friend, Mr. Fry, was discussing this. Does DOE reject Howarth's findings?

Mr. CRABTREE. Our methodology is fundamentally different from that of Mr. Howarth. I had said it earlier, I do not know if you were in the room, that our National Energy Technology Lab lifecycle analysis team is one of the most distinguished in the world. The work that you will see mid-December for the lifecycle analysis is their work, and the work of Mr. Howarth played no role in our decision to proceed with the analysis.

And I would note again for the Committee that there is a robust debate in the academic lifecycle analysis community, as there are in many other academic communities. But DOE and its labs and the career staff do their own work, sir.

Mr. PFLUGER. So, can you say that you reject Howarth's findings?

Mr. CRABTREE. No, I am not going to make comments like that, because the analysis is coming out mid-December. And I want all of you, industry, environmental organizations, the American public, to evaluate the study as the study when it is publicly available and not based on piecemeal and my comments.

Mr. PFLUGER. Has the White House directed DOE to finalize the study before January 20?

Mr. CRABTREE. No. We committed all along to have this—

Mr. PFLUGER. So, it was Secretary Granholm did this of her own ambition and the President never asked her to do this?

Mr. CRABTREE. That is correct.

Mr. PFLUGER. I asked her about a year ago, she was the principal advisor to the President of the United States on energy matters, and she could not conclusively say that she was. So, who else has led in this study? Can you name the names in the Department of Energy?

Mr. CRABTREE. I am not—my answer was not in reference to that; it was in reference to this study. And what I am telling you is Secretary Granholm is the one who made the decision to undertake the update.

Mr. PFLUGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. The Chair now recognizes our friend from New Mexico, Ms. Stansbury.

Ms. STANSBURY. All right. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

These are always interesting journeys into the inner psychic worlds of industry and whatever it is they are trying to get out of these hearings so they can make their case in front of boards and courts and board rooms. But I like to go back to basics a little bit, because I think one of the things that we can do in hearings is to help educate the public. I think for many folks who are not industry experts or not energy nerds like us, they may not even know what exactly LNG is, why do we export it, why is the United States the largest exporter of LNG, how did we get here.

So, I wonder, Assistant Secretary, could you just briefly kind of give a quick primer on what is LNG, where does it come from, why is the U.S. exporting so much of it, why did we need to do a study about it?

Mr. CRABTREE. So, LNG is natural gas highly compressed, so compressed that you can take very large volumes of gas and transport it on a ship efficiently, cost effectively. The technology was really pioneered decades ago by Japan, which has deeply deep energy insecurity because they do not produce their own energy resources. And at that starting from that Japanese leadership it has become a major component of global energy production and use.

Because it is natural gas but can be transported in compressed form, it is very convenient. It can be shipped all over the world. Our industry was financed by the private sector based on long-term contracts. The destinations of those contracts are flexible, so it has been very attractive for investors in the United States and around the world to invest in the development of our liquefaction terminals. U.S. LNG is especially attractive in the global market because of that destination flexibility.

The second part of your question, I am sorry—

Ms. STANSBURY. I think you are getting at it. You know, one of the things I think that is important to understand, because oftentimes just the kind of economic and production realities of oil and gas production get lost in these conversations. In New Mexico, similar to Texas, a significant portion of our state's income comes from oil and gas revenues, and so we track it very closely. And one of the things that I think is important to understand for folks who do not track the industry is that we had an exponential increase starting about a decade ago in gas production, especially in the Permian Basin, which is in New Mexico and Texas.

And as a result of that, in shrinking markets and the inability to offload gas in a timely manner in some cases and overproduction because there was a lot of new horizontal drilling happening, et cetera, exports became increasingly important because we had extra stuff, right. And so, there is an interest right now because there is a tremendous opportunity to increase drilling, which I think is the point that our colleagues across the aisle are making, but it is for the benefit of these private companies. So, it is in the interest of these private companies to drill, baby, drill as much as they can produce and export as much as they can produce. But one of the constraining factors is infrastructure to actually get it on to ships and actually send it overseas.

And so, I think folks who are listening who may not understand the industry and kind of the ebb and flow of oil and gas production may not really kind of understand kind of the economics of what

we are talking about here. This is not about American energy security. This is about creating international markets for private industry to sell excess gas that they have. And what the U.S. Government is trying to do under the Biden Administration is be responsible so that if industry is going to have a bonanza, which is being driven by international prices and demand, that we do it in a responsible manner, that it does not harm American consumers, that it does not drive up the cost of our own oil and gas prices, that it does not hurt us in our own utility payments, that it does not hit us at the pump, and that it does not have unintended consequences globally in terms of our geopolitical relationships with other countries, especially as we are facing conflicts and other responsibilities we have to our allies and those who are not our allies.

So, I think it is just important for folks to understand the context of what this study is. It is one of the most sophisticated modeling exercises. It is not a piece of paper, right. Folks are talking like, "oh, they found a dusty piece of paper somewhere in a filing cabinet that they had already wrote and filed away." This is a multi-million-dollar modeling exercise to understand global export markets for gas products that the industry would like the U.S. Government to permit and subsidize. And we are trying to figure it out, is it in the public interest to allow this giant bonanza without any guardrails around it? And that is really what this study is about. And that is why the majority is bringing this hearing here is because industry is asking them to.

I yield back.

Mr. FALLON. The Chair now recognizes our friend from Pennsylvania, Mr. Perry.

Mr. PERRY. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Crabtree, are you aware of any of our allies who have publicly supported what is described as the pause?

Mr. CRABTREE. Both prior to and following our decision to pause consideration of pending applications I met with a number of my counterparts in importing countries. And there are different views about the pause. But what has been mischaracterized—

Mr. PERRY. No, no. I am just asking you which ones I think publicly—yes, publicly—

Mr. CRABTREE. I am not going to—in a congressional hearing, I am not going to draw out our individual allies.

Mr. PERRY. I am not asking you to draw them out.

Mr. CRABTREE. Well, I said which ones?

Mr. PERRY. Well, I said publicly supported. So, you are not drawing someone out if you are just—if you are just echoing their—I am just asking you which one public—which ones publicly supported the so-called pause. Any?

Mr. CRABTREE. They also did not publicly oppose it either. You had individual policy-makers from Europe and East Asia, countries on both sides of the debate, make public statements. But as far as national governments—

Mr. PERRY. OK. So, which ones opposed it?

Mr. CRABTREE. In my experience, none opposed it. We explained our rationale. We explained how our decision does not affect natural gas—

Mr. PERRY. So, nobody opposed—

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. Exports to these countries until 2030—

Mr. PERRY. Right.

Mr. CRABTREE. And it will—under current authorizations—

Mr. PERRY. OK.

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. Under construction we will be doubling our exports. But within that context that we—

Mr. PERRY. But what you are implying is, is that no one—that no one opposed it and everyone—

Mr. CRABTREE. I am not aware of public opposition. There is a range of views in this country among individual—

Mr. PERRY. Yes, I get it.

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. Policy-makers in those countries. Clearly, yes.

Mr. PERRY. But are you aware that anybody publicly supported it? Any?

Mr. CRABTREE. No. But I am saying that in the—

Mr. PERRY. But it is important, because what you are implying is, is that they did not publicly support it, but behind closed doors, just to me, they were all for it, they just did not want to say so publicly.

Mr. CRABTREE. I am not suggesting that.

Mr. PERRY. OK. Well, as long as you are not suggesting that.

Let me just move on. There were 97 documents—approximately 97 documents responsive to a FOIA request submitted by the public interest group Government Accountability and Oversight regarding the Department's study of LNG exports. Why is the Department refusing to release those documents?

Mr. CRABTREE. Sir, I have already addressed all of this.

Mr. PERRY. I am sorry if I was not here.

Mr. CRABTREE. No apologies, but I will try to reiterate briefly.

Mr. PERRY. OK.

Mr. CRABTREE. So, my understanding again is that I am not part of the documents production team. I—in the FOIA team at DOE, I am not part of that process. What I understand from that team is that they have engaged constructively with the Committee. They have produced documents on four different occasions and will be doing so again on Friday, that a large—

Mr. PERRY. Does that include—

Mr. CRABTREE. And as far as—

Mr. PERRY [continuing]. These 97 documents?

Mr. CRABTREE. I cannot speak to the 97 documents. I do know that the FOIA request is under litigation, and so I am not going to speak to something that is under litigation. But in any case, I am not involved in that process. What I offered to your colleague earlier is that if there are specific concerns about responsiveness or how this is being approached, I am happy to take that back to the team and have follow-up—

Mr. PERRY. OK. Well, let me ask you this—

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. With your staff.

Mr. PERRY [continuing]. Mr. Crabtree. Sixteen states sued the Administration, and in response a Federal District Court issued a stay against the pause going into effect. But the Administration appears in violation of that. Why would that be?

Mr. CRABTREE. The Department of Energy complies with court orders. We—in August, we authorized a—

Mr. PERRY. So, you are saying you are in compliance right now with this Federal District Court which issued a stay against the pause?

Mr. CRABTREE. I am not going to comment—I am not going to comment on pending litigation, but what I am saying—

Mr. PERRY. No, it is not—the judge issued a stay. It is not pending. He issued a stay against the pause. So, is the pause in effect or is it not in effect?

Mr. CRABTREE. In following the judge's order, the judge's order was in July, and at the end of August we issued a non-FTA authorization to New Fortress Energy Altamira. I am not going to speak to what other activities are underway. Across administrations this program has not talked about the timing or which specific decisions are forthcoming. I am not going to change that now.

Mr. PERRY. Let me ask you this: did the White House meet with TikTok influencers leading up to the pause in LNG exports?

Mr. CRABTREE. I cannot speak to—

Mr. PERRY. Were you involved in any of those meetings.

Mr. CRABTREE. I—no. I have no involvement whatsoever—

Mr. PERRY. You were not—

Mr. CRABTREE. I do not even have a TikTok account. I have never been—

Mr. PERRY. I am not asking if you do. You do not have to have an account.

Mr. CRABTREE. I know you are not but, I mean, I have no, zero—

Mr. PERRY. Zero meetings with a TikTok influencer?

Mr. CRABTREE. Zero.

Mr. PERRY. OK. And what about with Mr. Bill McKibbin? Did you have any meetings with him?

Mr. CRABTREE. I have never met with Mr. Bill McKibbin. I know who he is, obviously. I have actually personally never met him, let alone in my time at DOE, never.

Mr. PERRY. All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield.

Mr. FALLON. The Chair now recognizes our good friend from Colorado, Ms. Boebert.

Ms. BOEBERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Crabtree, 16 states sued the Biden-Harris Administration over the LNG pause, in response to which a Federal District Court judge issued a stay against the LNG pause going into effect. Why are DOE and the Biden-Harris regime continuing with the pause and defying the order issued by the Federal District Court?

And I apologize if you have answered this, but I have not received the answer to this in this hearing yet.

Mr. CRABTREE. What I said just previously with Congressman Perry is that we, following the judge's order at the end of August, we issued a non-FTA authorization to New Fortress Energy Altamira. And I am not going to speak to which further applications and the timing of them, but it is our intent to comply with any judge's order.

Ms. BOEBERT. If it is your intent, then why is it not happening?

Mr. CRABTREE. I am not going to comment further on something that is in litigation.

Ms. BOEBERT. So, we are here as United States Representatives in an Oversight Subcommittee, having a hearing, bringing you in from the Administration. We have—your salary is appropriated by Congress. And it is our role to have oversight and accountability, and for you to sit here and refuse to answer is really struggling. In fact, it may be the reason why we have to create a commission now, the Department of Government Efficiency Commission, to have actual oversight and accountability on the administration, on bureaucrats. You know, we used to call that Congress.

But when we bring you in here, we are just stonewalled. You have a Federal court decision on this stay, and this decision is being defied by the Administration, and you refuse to comment on why.

Mr. CRABTREE. Congresswoman, it is common practice for someone in my role not to comment on something that is subject to pending litigation.

Ms. BOEBERT. It is common that it is frustrating to the American citizens who pay your salary, and these tax dollars are squandered, rules are defied.

Now, Mr. Crabtree, this LNG pause, it is clearly just more pandering to the Green New Deal extremists from this Administration. Exporting LNG is actually great for job creation, our economy, and even emissions reductions. No one produces energy cleaner in the entire world than we do here in America. The United States produces the cleanest energy in the world, and if the rest of the world is not getting energy from us, where are they getting it from? They are getting it from Russia, China, Venezuela, from Iran. Our natural gas is 42 percent cleaner than Russia's gas.

This pause is funding both sides of wars around the world, and we need to stop buying oil and gas from Russia, stop begging OPEC, Venezuela, and even Iran to produce energy for us and start producing and exporting American energy and creating these American jobs. And I am confident that the next Administration, with President Trump's leadership, will prioritize our natural security and our energy security.

And the lack of transparency—

Mr. CRABTREE. Congresswoman?

Ms. BOEBERT. Yes, sir.

Mr. CRABTREE. Congresswoman, this decision to pause our pending applications, as I have said several times in this Committee, have not led to stopping one BTU of U.S. natural gas exports, because we are currently exporting 12 billion cubic feet. We are about to—

Ms. BOEBERT. How many jobs have been lost?

Mr. CRABTREE. Let me finish. We are about to get to 14 billion cubic feet, and we have authorized—

Ms. BOEBERT. How many jobs—

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. We have authorized an additional—I am going to finish this.

Ms. BOEBERT. Actually, the time is mine. The time is mine and—

Mr. CRABTREE. We have authorized an additional 12 billion cubic feet that is under construction—

Ms. BOEBERT. How many American jobs have been lost?

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. And there will be no impact—

Ms. BOEBERT. Tens of thousands of American jobs—

Mr. CRABTREE. No, they have not.

Ms. BOEBERT [continuing]. Have been lost. Absolutely, they have. My district, in Colorado, has been regulated into poverty because of decisions like this, because of defying Federal court rulings. This Administration is costing American jobs and livelihoods.

Mr. CRABTREE. Construction of liquefaction terminals on the Gulf Coast is—

Ms. BOEBERT. Mothers are forced to go to work and get a second job.

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Crabtree? Mr. Crabtree, can you let the Member finish, please, and then you can respond?

Ms. BOEBERT. Now, the lack of transparency by DOE is demonstrated, not only by the DOE's withholding of the FOIA'd documents that could answer legitimate requests, but also by DOE refusing to give Members of Congress answers to their questions about the LNG export pause.

And that is what you are doing today, you are refusing to give us answers here that we are trying to seek.

Why is the DOE not responding to questions asked by Members of Congress?

Mr. CRABTREE. As I have already said, we have provided documents on four different occasions—we will do so again on Friday—to this Committee. As far as the litigation, I am not going to speak to that.

And I do have to respond to the issue of jobs. Right now, on the Gulf Coast, the development of liquefaction terminals is—

Ms. BOEBERT. No. Mr. Crabtree—

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. Proceeding at such a pace that they are—

Ms. BOEBERT [continuing]. Mr. Crabtree—

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. Having challenges finding employees.

Ms. BOEBERT [continuing]. The time is expired. I do want—did the Biden Administration make the decision to institute a pause on LNG exports to appease climate activists?

Mr. CRABTREE. No.

Ms. BOEBERT. I believe they did. My time is expired.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield.

Mr. FALLON. The Chair now recognizes our good friend from Louisiana, Mr. Higgins.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Crabtree, do you know who I am? Do you know who I am?

Mr. CRABTREE. Yes, sir, I do, and good to see you again.

Mr. HIGGINS. It is my district that has been most severely injured by this pause which has in itself injured the planet, because we most certainly produce the cleanest LNG and transportable, affordable energy for the entire world to consume. And the pause in permitting has created quite a crisis of continuity when massive

projects that require international investment—you know these things.

So, I am talking to you right now, Mr. Crabtree, and you are talking to me. It is of minor importance what you told other members during this hearing or what you will tell other members after I ask you some questions.

What is of major importance is that when I ask you a question, you answer it. And do not raise your finger to me, good sir.

Are you—are you the Assistant Secretary for the United States Department of Energy, Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management?

Mr. CRABTREE. Yes, sir.

Mr. HIGGINS. Do you lead and direct the fossil energy and carbon management research and development programs?

Mr. CRABTREE. Yes, sir.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you.

So, a court—if it is OK with you, this is Article III, it is part of our Constitution. A court makes inquiries and has official statements and writ of the historical record. And part of this court's historical record was reference to the frequently mentioned report here—we cannot seem to get our hands on—that a second search on Hotel Quebec 202402097 foxtrot, was completed in August 2024.

The DOE has subsequently identified 97 potentially responsive documents, totaling 4,354 pages.

Mr. Crabtree, are you aware of the existence of the 4,354-some-odd pages referenced by this court document?

Mr. CRABTREE. Yes, and that those documents were produced.

Mr. HIGGINS. No, I asked you, are you aware of their existence? That was my question.

Mr. CRABTREE. I cannot individually speak to being aware of all those documents.

Mr. HIGGINS. So, who would be aware? Because that is a research document they are referencing, and you stated earlier you lead the fossil energy and carbon management research and development programs.

So, life comes down to one guy, and you are the one guy, that if you do not know of the existence of 4,354 pages of research material in your office, who should we ask?

Mr. CRABTREE. Sir, I actually appreciate that you called it research material, because that is the type of material that our labs and our team have been producing for various aspects of the overall study.

Mr. HIGGINS. Reclaiming my time. You run the research and development programs. You just told me you did. Were you incorrect in that assessment?

Mr. CRABTREE. I did, but if you are asking me if I am personally aware—

Mr. HIGGINS. There is no buts.

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. Of all those documents, then—

Mr. HIGGINS. Do you run the research and development programs?

Mr. CRABTREE. Yes, sir, I do.

Mr. HIGGINS. Yes. And these are research documents—do we concede that point—these 4,354—

Mr. CRABTREE. They are analytical documents.

Mr. HIGGINS [continuing]. They are research documents? Four-thousand-three-hundred-fifty-four pages of research documents out of your office, this Committee wants those pages. Will you deliver those 4,354 pages to this Committee very quickly or not? Will you deliver those pages?

We do not care what is in them. You might think it is crazy, but we get to decide what is in them. We get to review the original evidence.

So, I am asking you, in your capacity as leader of your office, you have possession of these 4,354 pages of documents. This Committee demands them. Will you deliver them or not, good sir?

Mr. CRABTREE. Sir, I am not responsible for document production. I will take your request and your insistence back to the team.

Mr. HIGGINS. What does that mean, take it back to the team?

Mr. CRABTREE. The team that is responsible for document production.

Mr. HIGGINS. Will you submit a request tomorrow that the documents be turned over to this Committee?

Mr. CRABTREE. I will discuss this tomorrow with the team, yes, but I am not involved in—

Mr. HIGGINS. Can you identify who the team is?

Mr. CRABTREE. I am not going to speak to who is—

Mr. HIGGINS. What do you mean you are not going to speak to—are these like CIA members or something?

Mr. CRABTREE. No, but I am not going—

Mr. HIGGINS. They are part of your office, right?

Mr. CRABTREE. I am not going to speak to—I am not going to speak to the individuals that I—

Mr. HIGGINS. Are these individuals that work for you?

Mr. CRABTREE. No. The document—

Mr. HIGGINS. Individuals that you work for?

Mr. CRABTREE. The FOIA and document production work is done by a separate part of DOE.

Mr. HIGGINS. I am not FOIA. I am Clay Higgins. I represent my district.

Mr. CRABTREE. I know. I am just telling you, both are done by—are done outside of my office, sir—

Mr. HIGGINS. I am sitting on this Committee.

Mr. CRABTREE [continuing]. Is what I am saying.

Mr. HIGGINS. I am asking you to deliver these 4,354 pages. You have stated under oath before this Committee that you will discuss that request with your, quote-unquote, team tomorrow.

We expect these papers, or somebody, Mr. Chairman, got to be held in contempt if we do not get these 4,354 pages of documents. And some of those people may be sitting in this room.

I yield.

Mr. FALLON. The Chair recognizes the Ranking Member for closing remarks.

Ms. STANSBURY. All right. Well, another interesting hearing before the Subcommittee. You know, I would suggest that if folks are looking for missing documents, there might be a certain bathroom in southern Florida where a lot of government documents have been illegally stored. Just an idea.

It is also interesting—

Mr. FALLON. Also, a garage in Delaware.

Ms. STANSBURY [continuing]. To hear that my friends across the aisle are suddenly very concerned about having social media influencers involved in government decision-making. I hope that will extend to the new Subcommittee that a certain billionaire, social media owner is hoping to intersect with right here in this Committee in the coming years.

And I am also intrigued to hear that my colleagues are suddenly very concerned about foreign influence over American energy production, given the amount of Russian disinformation we hear daily inside this Committee.

But I hope these are all positive signs that we are doing real oversight here. I guess time will tell.

I would like to ask for unanimous consent to correct the record here. I have got a *Reuters* article from March 20, 2024, that talks about the oil boom under the Biden Administration and how it has fueled job production here in the United States.

Mr. FALLON. Would you like to enter that into the record?

Ms. STANSBURY. Yes, please.

Mr. FALLON. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. STANSBURY. All right. So, I think it is great to end on a factual note. And I know that the Department of Energy fully plans to, as was stated here today under oath, to release their many-year study that spans multiple national laboratories, multiple disciplines, multiple models, thousands of documents, research activities, in the coming days.

And it sounds like there is going to be a robust 60-day comment period during which Members of Congress cannot only look under the hood at what is in the study, what went into it, they can get documents associated with it. The industries who are interested in it can make comments on it. The environmental community can make comments on it.

So, for folks who are interested in this topic, stay tuned. It sounds like Department of Energy is going to release their study in just a few short days.

So, with that, I yield back. Thank you.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you.

So, you know, I now recognize myself for a closing statement.

We have said, repeatedly, we heard that this was a brief pause. A brief pause is a few days or even maybe a couple of weeks. It is not a full year.

And one of my colleagues asked about what industry discussions occurred before this hearing or what industry discussions occurred to prompt this hearing, did industry ask for this hearing. I can unequivocally say that there was zero discussions with anyone in industry. This was something that we decided to do.

Then I heard the comment, kind of a class warfare, anti-capitalistic comment about we are here to pump up the profits. Well, I would rather have American jobs created and sustained and supported than jobs in Qatar or Russia or Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, et al. I am rooting for American profits. I am rooting for American prosperity. I do not want American poverty.

And, you know, you could definitely have done, Mr. Crabtree, this study while also approving new export permits. You could have done both. You did not have to do—it was not an either-or scenario. They did not need to be mutually exclusive.

And then we heard about, well, you know, we have record highs of energy production. A lot of this happens—what we produce today is because of policies that were set in place 5 years ago, 4 years ago, 7 years ago. There is a lag time—that needs to be mentioned—and it takes years, and there is a ripple effect.

And then for someone of your stature, Mr. Crabtree, to say that a year-long pause has no impact is inane, and it is just—it is fatuous. I mean, it is really remarkable that you made that claim.

And I think on November 5 the American people made it very clear that they were tired of an Administration playing politics with their future. Enough is enough.

When we have members of other nation-states and allies come into our office unprompted and beg us to see if there is anything that we can do to have this pause/ban lifted, it is really telling. And it is chilling that the President did not even know and was not seemingly aware of the impact of this pause. And we have seen unnecessary damage done by this Administration across industries, especially the energy sector, by leftists that want to demonize energy production.

We are not where—we are not in a situation where we can go completely renewable. I know that that is what they teach these young kids in college campuses, but it is not factual. We are where we are. And then to have the President of the United States at a State of the Union Address say that we may need fossil fuels 10 years from now is, again, ludicrous and to the extreme.

Now, we will see what happens 10 years from now.

There is really never a discussion either on nuclear energy with folks that are on the political left. If you want to talk about reducing carbon emissions, I think that is a discussion that we really should have, if we are serious about this, or if it is just trying to pollute young minds into voting a certain way.

So, what did this thing serve? It certainly did not serve Mr. Higgins' district and the energy workers in Louisiana and wondering why their paychecks are not—I mean, are they going to have a paycheck, a steady one, after these stalled LNG exports on the Gulf Coast. And it did not serve a mother in Texas who works multiple jobs to afford her family's bills when energy prices inevitably rise during the winter.

Who will it really serve is leftist climate activists so they can feel good about themselves at cocktail parties that they are doing something good when they are not. They are causing far more harm. American families suffer when we are not dealing with the realities on the ground.

But there is good news. America rejected these policies last month, and we are on a cusp of a new era, I believe, in global energy leadership under President-elect Trump.

I think what we will see, not only in the next 4 years but in the next decade-plus, is a renaissance of American energy. And the incoming Administration has vowed to end this political nonsense and return commonsense policies that benefit all Americans, and

the value of LNG exports provide our economy and the energy sector of our allies.

I mean, it is synergistic and it does create a boost, and it cannot be overstated. The U.S. is uniquely situated. We have been blessed by history to meet our energy needs at home, while at the same time maintaining a strategic advantage of supplying the world with clean, affordable energy.

And the more energy that we can produce—we do it cleaner—and export to our allies, it really does put us in a position—the former Secretary of State Pompeo was saying, when he would negotiate with other nation-states and his counterparts and heads of state, it gave him more leverage because we have what people need, and that is—you know, it is all interrelated.

In a recent study published in the Sustainable Chemistry and Energy, they found that the American LNG delivered to Europe had a greenhouse gas intensity 22 to 53 percent lower than previous studies, meaning that previous assessments overestimated the environmental impacts.

I would like to enter this study into the record so our colleagues at the DOE may review these findings.

And without objection, so ordered.

Mr. FALLON. In the coming years, the world is going to continue to need more energy, not less, and the American people know this because they are living with the impacts of these short-sided decisions every day.

Mr. Crabtree, I am sorry that this Administration has put you in a position to have to defend policies that are not in the best interest of the country. It is a failure at the highest level, and the energy industry will not soon forget the harm done by your colleagues.

As the 118th Congress soon comes to a close, we have an opportunity to turn the page on the last 4 years and put the interest of the United States front and center once again. America is blessed with an abundance of resources to fill our future energy needs as well as those of our allies and a workforce that is eager to make this possible.

The incoming Trump Administration is committed to supporting energy workers, both in my home state of Texas and across the country, New Mexico included, and I look forward to the next 4 years ahead.

With that, and without objection, all members will have 5 legislative days within which to submit materials, to submit additional written questions for the witnesses—or in this case, the witness, unfortunately—which will be forwarded to the witness for his response.

If there is no further business, without objection, the Subcommittee shall stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:47 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

