

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 2, 2020

The Hon. Emmanuel Macron
President of France
Palais de l'Élysée
Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré
75008 Paris, France

Mr. President,

According to press reports, your government has unfortunately recently intervened and blocked a commercial contract to purchase U.S. liquified natural gas (LNG) on a misinformed assumption that U.S. shipments are supposedly more greenhouse gas (GHG) intensive from a life-cycle perspective than other foreign gas supply.¹ We respectfully disagree with this assessment and ask that your government please re-examine the facts and reconsider this ill-informed decision, which we believe is detrimental to our joint energy security goals and efforts to reduce global GHG emissions.

Our official government analysis indicates that U.S. LNG exports to the European Union (EU), including the French Republic, result in fewer emissions than some of the largest exporters of natural gas to France, including Russia and Algeria. According to a study conducted by our National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) and released last year, Russian natural gas shipped by pipeline to Europe has approximately 41 percent higher life-cycle emissions (CO₂ equivalent) than U.S. LNG shipped to the same destination.² In the case of Algeria, which accounts for 60 percent of French LNG imports, that country's natural gas exports to Europe have roughly 20 percent higher life cycle emissions than U.S. shipments.³

According to a 2020 Eurostat report, approximately 45 percent of EU natural gas imports were from Russia, and an additional 12 percent from Algeria. Reliance on Russia is even greater for central and eastern EU nations.⁴ France and the rest of the EU are missing an important opportunity to utilize U.S. energy resources to advance energy security and global emissions goals, including those in the Paris Agreement. Based on NETL's work, we conclude that if the EU simply replaced its current supply of Russian natural gas for electricity production with U.S. LNG, global emissions would fall approximately 72 million metric tons annually.⁵ For

¹ LeFebvre, Ben. "French Government Blocks U.S. LNG as Too Dirty," *Politico*, October 21, 2020.

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/10/21/french-government-blocks-lng-deal-431028>

² Selina Roman-White et al., "Life Cycle GHG Perspective on Exporting LNG From the U.S. 2019 Update," *National Energy Technology Laboratory*, (September 2019). <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2019/09/f66/2019%20NETL%20LCA-GHG%20Report.pdf>

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Eurostat, "EU Imports of Energy Products – Recent Developments," October 2020. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/EU_imports_of_energy_products_-_recent_developments#Main_suppliers_of_natural_gas_and_petroleum_oils_to_the_EU

⁵ Assuming 35 percent of EU electricity generated from natural gas is sourced from Russia (244 million megawatt hours) and 297 kgCO₂e lower life-cycle emissions per megawatt hour from U.S. supply.

comparison, the EU estimates that it needs to reduce its emissions by 78 million metric tons each year to reach its 2030 targets.¹

We sincerely appreciate your thoughtful reservations related to Nord Stream 2. We agree with you that the EU should not increase its reliance on Russian gas; in fact, it is in the interest of the transatlantic alliance that EU nations reduce their current dependence. America stands ready to help achieve that objective. We have worked particularly hard to ensure the abundant energy resources with which our nation is blessed are accessible to the global community. We endeavor to promote increased energy security for our allies and partners, including the French Republic – our oldest ally.

We would be remiss not to share our deep concerns that Russia is covertly using non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to influence the decision-making process in Paris and elsewhere, including here in the United States, to block initiatives that reduce energy reliance on Moscow. A 2018 report by the Republican-led House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for example, determined, “As the threat of American energy continues to grow, so does the Kremlin’s incentive to influence energy operations in Europe and the United States. Moreover, as they have demonstrated, the Kremlin will use any and all tools at their disposal to preserve Russia’s dominant energy status.”²

Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, reached similar conclusions that same year, highlighting the meddling of the Russian government in opposing natural gas from non-Russian sources.³ The Cardin report includes a reference to reports of NATO officials exposing Russian intelligence agencies for providing “covert support to European environmental groups to campaign against fracking for natural gas, thereby keeping the EU more dependent on Russian supplies.”⁴ The report further notes that “the Russian government has invested \$95 million in NGOs that seek to persuade EU governments to end shale gas exploration.”⁵

For her part, former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recognized the challenge posed by Russia in a 2014 speech. According to press reports, Clinton pointed out that “phony environmental groups” had been funded by Moscow to oppose fracking and natural gas infrastructure.⁶

¹ “Gas 2019,” *International Energy Agency*, (2019). <https://www.iea.org/reports/market-report-series-gas-2019>

² House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Majority Staff Report. “Russian Attempts to Influence U.S. Domestic Energy Markets by Exploiting Social Media,” March 2018. <https://republicans-science.house.gov/sites/republicans.science.house.gov/files/documents/SST%20Staff%20Report%20-%20Russian%20Attempts%20to%20Influence%20U.S.%20Domestic%20Energy%20Markets%20by%20Exploiting%20Social%20Media%2003.01.18.pdf>.

³ Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Minority Staff Report. “Putin’s Asymmetric Assault on Democracy in Russia and Europe: Implications for U.S. National Security,” January 2018. <https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/FinalRR.pdf>

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Richardson, Valerie. “Leaked Emails Showing Hillary Clinton Blaming Russians for Funding ‘Phony’ Anti-Fracking Groups,” *Washington Times*, October 10, 2016. <https://m.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/oct/10/clinton-blames-russians-anti-fracking-groups/>

In the U.S. case, it is unfortunate that opposition to natural gas pipelines has led to increased fuel imports from Russia.⁷ As Russian energy sources have higher life-cycle GHG emissions compared to U.S. energy supplies, anti-pipeline actions, which impede the flow of domestically-produced natural gas, have resulted in increased global emissions and reduced U.S. energy security.⁸

In your determinations, we ask that you weigh this bipartisan-supported intelligence, as well as press accounts that report lobbying activity conducted by Friends of the Earth (FoE), an NGO that has historically opposed U.S. LNG exports.⁹ We would ask that France explore the possibility that FoE, which open reporting has suggested has been the focus of Russian infiltration in the past, could be an unwitting agent of Moscow. We suspect that France has been provided questionable NGO data funded by Gazprom, and we urge you to give appropriate weight to the work of our Department of Energy's laboratories, which enjoy a close partnership with France and other European countries.

As allies, we sincerely hope that you take a facts-based approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reject potential Russian manipulation designed to undermine our economic and energy security. In our opinion, that process should require an analysis of life cycle GHG emissions. We are confident you would find U.S. energy supplies are cleaner than much of the competition, including Russia and Algeria, which should result in your government reversing its position on U.S. LNG shipments to France. Absent France cancelling natural gas contracts with both Russia and Algeria as well, we find using GHG emissions as the justification for blocking U.S. LNG dubious at best.

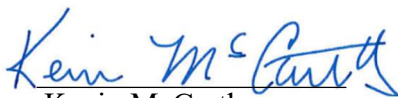
Sincerely,



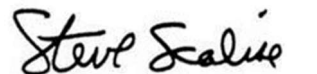
Garret Graves
Member of Congress



Dan Crenshaw
Member of Congress



Kevin McCarthy
Member of Congress



Steve Scalise
Member of Congress

⁷ Malik, Naureen, "Amid an Export Boom, the U.S. Is Still Importing Natural Gas," *Bloomberg*, (December 2018).

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-27/amid-an-export-boom-the-u-s-is-still-importing-natural-gas>

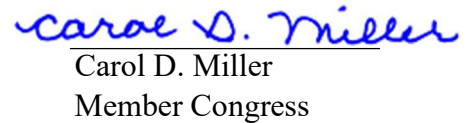
⁸ Yudichak, John, "To help working class, Democrats must recognize value of low-cost energy," *Lehigh Valley Live*, (November 2019).

<https://www.lehighvalleylive.com/opinion/2019/11/to-help-working-class-democrats-must-recognize-value-of-low-cost-energy-opinion.html>

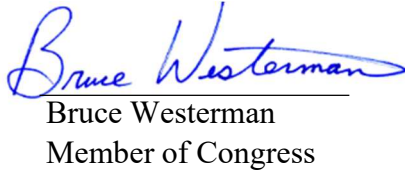
⁹ LeFebvre, Ben.



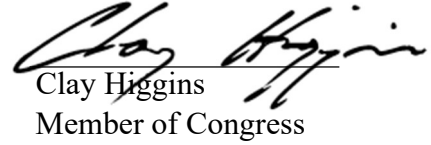
Kelly Armstrong
Member of Congress



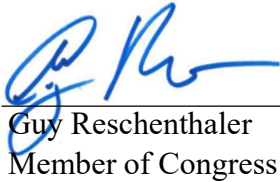
Carol D. Miller
Member Congress



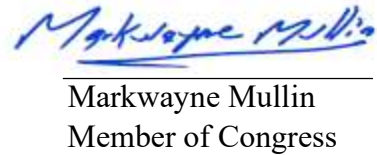
Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress



Clay Higgins
Member of Congress



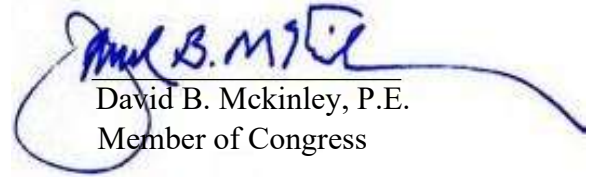
Guy Reschenthaler
Member of Congress



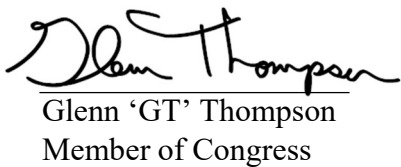
Markwayne Mullin
Member of Congress



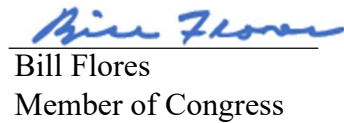
Michael Cloud
Member of Congress



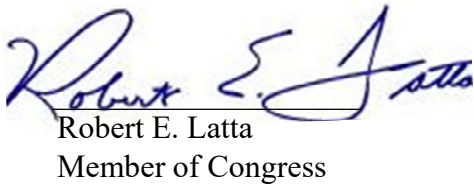
David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress



Glenn 'GT' Thompson
Member of Congress



Bill Flores
Member of Congress



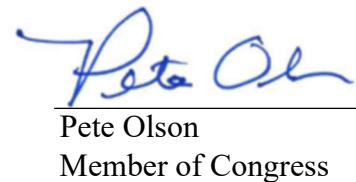
Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress



Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress



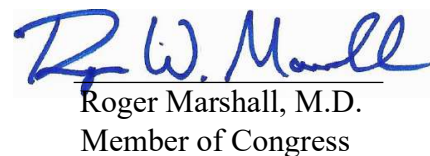
Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



Pete Olson
Member of Congress



John Shimkus
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Roger Marshall, M.D.
Member of Congress



Chris Stewart

Member of Congress