

**TESTIMONY OF DAVID MALLINO  
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ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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On behalf of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), the men and women who dedicate their lives to building America, I want to express our gratitude to Chairman Rush and Ranking Member Upton for the opportunity to testify here today.

By way of introduction, LIUNA is an organization of more than 500,000 workers in four hundred Local Unions across the United States who go to work every day building America. We are proud to be at the forefront of the fight to highlight our nation's infrastructure needs and to represent the men and women in the trenches who can do something about it.

LIUNA members build the nation's core infrastructure: transportation, water systems, and energy network. Laborers construct sewer systems, dig tunnels, assemble renewable energy projects, and build pipelines.

LIUNA members also rely on this infrastructure every day like all Americans, and they are proud of their work and the value it brings to their communities and the nation. We work with our employers and industry partners to try to create bipartisan policies that improve opportunities for business, workers, and consumers. We strive to enact sound policies that restore sanity to the way the United States produces and distributes energy resources while protecting consumers and the environment.

During the Great Recession, unemployment in the construction sector reached nearly 30%. But for the incredibly good jobs that were created by the boom in North American energy development, tens of thousands more workers would have been forced into unemployment. These jobs were not just some temporary work that can be performed by just anyone. These were good unionized jobs that require a high degree of training and expertise. They paid family sustaining wages with good health insurance benefits and helped provide for a pension for the workers when they retire.

LIUNA has been at the forefront of the American labor movement in trying to forge an energy policy that reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and is proud to have endorsed a comprehensive strategy to combat climate change. However, we have become distrustful of former allies who now find it impossible to embrace rational dialogue and compromise as a model for positive change.

LIUNA encourages the members of this committee, and everyone in Congress, to put aside partisanship and collaborate to truly address the infrastructure crisis. I understand that everything in Washington is about the next election cycle, but for a construction laborer, the next election is an eternity away. . . but their next paycheck and their next house payment is just around the corner. They don't care about the bitter political fighting in Washington. They care about making it home safe at the end of the day having been paid a fair wage for their hard work, and they don't care about jobs and industries that don't exist yet when there is a job in front of them right now; a job that leaves something behind that actually benefits their communities and their country.

I want to stress that LIUNA believes in an "all of the above" approach to energy development. While much of our attention over the last several years has been devoted to trying to defend the jobs of union members who build our country's vital pipeline system, LIUNA members have also built solar plants in the California dessert, wind farms in the Midwest, and are working on a nuclear facility in Georgia.

Creating a political climate where energy resources are allowed to be developed after they are vetted, reviewed, and permitted, will allow an enormous amount of private investments to create

millions of new jobs across all sectors of the economy, private sector jobs that create opportunity for workers and are the foundation of local economies.

The United States' natural gas production can fully meet the domestic need for natural gas and help supply our allies and trading partners abroad. However, to take advantage of this abundance, we need to expand our energy infrastructure systems to safely, responsibly, and efficiently transport natural gas to consumers. This includes additional natural gas gathering, transmission and distribution infrastructure to deliver this domestic energy to power plants, manufacturers and local natural gas utilities. Congress should be taking steps to ensure that public policy advances these goals instead of stifling them.

It is time to put aside the political games and develop a rational energy policy that protects both the environment and consumers, creates good jobs today, and develops the new industries that will be a source of jobs in the future. The Natural Gas Act establishes a framework that facilitates the timely and efficient modernization of the energy infrastructure needed to connect energy producers and energy consumers.

LIUNA supports a common sense energy policy, one that replaces foreign sources of energy with domestically produced energy that fosters domestic job creation instead of funding foreign extremists. Our members support incrementally lowering emissions, which seems to make more sense than the "all or nothing" approach embraced by the political extremes. And, as we all have a stake in the future of the planet, then workers, too, deserve to have a voice in the debate, even those who may disagree with the political extremes. There is dignity in work, and nobody should be attacked or degraded because they seek to earn a living and provide for their families.

Unleashing the wealth of energy resources in North America will create economic opportunities in communities across the country, and it will help us end our dependence on foreign sources of energy from nations that seek to undermine the American ideals of freedom and liberty.

The solution is staring us in the face. Modernizing our energy networks along with investing in other core infrastructure can create millions of jobs for workers across all segments of the economy. Job creation and economic opportunity don't come from the pages of a glossy think tank report or an academic's research paper. In the construction sector, job creation comes from investments into infrastructure. Sometimes that comes in the form of public investments into roads, bridges, tunnels, and water systems, or it comes from the private sector investments into projects that help fuel our daily lives like pipelines.

According to the National Association of Manufacturers, natural gas development generated \$101 billion dollars in real gross domestic product (GDP) growth each year from 2013-2018, which created 700,000 more American jobs that contributed \$87 billion in annual disposable income. In the chemical manufacturing sector, which is the single largest consumer of natural gas, more than \$202 billion has been invested in new plant capacity generating \$292 billion in new economic output, and is predicted to create almost 800,000 in new jobs by 2025.

The infrastructure buildout itself creates opportunities for America's skilled trade workers. At LIUNA alone, our members have seen the work hours on transmission pipelines increase from around 10.5 million hours in 2015 to more than 22 million hours in 2018. And while the increases are not as dramatic, LIUNA work hours in natural gas distribution networks have also increased, adding approximately another 8 million hours . . . with distribution work expected to continue to grow assuming adequate supplies of natural gas remain available. And LIUNA is just one of four unions who are signatory to the National Pipeline Agreement that covers the unionized work in this sector. Our brothers and sisters at the International Union of Operating Engineers, United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters, and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters have also seen the same sort of work hour increases.

We can help continue to build this nation's economy, provide jobs for working Americans, and leave behind real assets that will benefit taxpayers and our entire nation for generations to come. This isn't a Republican issue or a Democratic issue. There isn't a single American worker who

doesn't want affordable energy, good roads, safe bridges, and clean drinking water. Our policy makers should work together to achieve those goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony. LIUNA members are eager and excited to continue our work building America so America works.

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