

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 20, 2020

The Honorable Dan Brouillette
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Brouillette,

We write to oppose the Department of Energy's proposal to extend existing authorizations to export American natural gas abroad through the end of 2050.¹ This proposal will harm American consumers by giving companies free rein to continue shipping natural gas overseas for a higher profit, which drives up household costs domestically. The push toward unlimited natural gas exports leaves Americans to deal with the dangerous environmental and public health impacts of natural gas development and infrastructure, while cutting American consumers out of any potential benefits to their budgets from the natural gas production surge. Finally, the unfettered exports of natural gas contribute to irrevocable climate harm, making it harder for other countries to move away from fossil fuels and toward zero-emission, clean and renewable sources of energy.

The Department of Energy has never denied a natural gas export permit application, and already automatically approves export applications to countries with which the United States has a free trade agreement. It should not serve as a rubber stamp for approving massive quantities of natural gas exports from the United States, but should be actively working to ensure that our national energy policy is in the public interest. The Energy Information Administration has concluded that increased liquid natural gas exports result in increased domestic consumer expenditures and higher natural gas prices, as well as increased carbon emissions.

We should be protecting Americans and the climate, not turning a blind eye to the effects of essentially unlimited exports. A mass extension of natural gas export authorizations for the next 30 years is unnecessary, unwarranted, and would abdicate the Department's role in protecting American consumers.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

¹ 85 FR 7672