



April 28, 2014

The Hon. Joe Manchin, III
United States Senate
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Manchin:

Thank you for your outstanding service to West Virginia. Your views about energy and representation of our great state are greatly appreciated by the West Virginia Chamber.

I write regarding liquid natural gas (LNG) exports – specifically through legislation authored by your colleague, Sen. Mark Udall, expediting the two dozen projects pending at the Department of Energy.

Despite increases in domestic oil and gas production that have contributed to the U.S. being the world's biggest energy producer, America is not meeting its potential as a power in the growing global export market for natural gas. Export terminals that can convert natural gas into LNG and load it for export overseas are facing a delay of two years. The problem is not that businesses are not ready to invest their own capital in these export facilities. The problem is the familiar one of unnecessary regulatory bureaucracy.

Department of Energy approvals are required to build and operate terminals. A second export license is also needed to export LNG to countries that do not have fair trade agreements with the United States. The potential for benefits to both our economy and our national security is significant.

Each month of delay means lost opportunity for business and job growth in West Virginia. As you are aware the Marcellus Shale, and more recently the Utica Shale, give us bountiful supplies of a commodity the world needs –produced right here at home in a manner that preserves our environment. West Virginia can remain a global leader in energy production. Our coal, natural gas and oil industries deserve responsible energy policies that provide regulatory certainty in order to grow our job market and sustain our long-term economy. When it comes to natural gas exports, though, it will remain a case of, “all dressed up with no place to go” until the DOE process is streamlined and export terminals are built.

Your leadership on this subject would be welcome. Your qualifications for the job are obvious. Over the years you have been an active and knowledgeable supporter of all sectors of West Virginia's energy industry, and you have that all too rare gift for building bipartisan, commonsense solutions.

As always, we appreciate everything you do for West Virginia. If the Chamber or I personally can be of any help to your office on the issue of LNG exports or anything else, please let me know.

Sincerely

Stephen G. Roberts
President, West Virginia Chamber of Commerce