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From the desk of **Jon A. Barton**

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U.S. Department of Energy (FE-34)
Attn: Larine Moore and Marc Talbert
Office of Natural Gas Regulatory Activities, Office of Fossil Energy
P.O. Box 44375
Washington, DC 20026-4375

Via email: fergas@hq.doe.gov

Re: FE Docket No. 12-32-LNG

Dear Mr. Talbert & Ms. Moore:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comment on the proposed Jordan Cove Energy Project to export liquid natural gas from the United State via the Oregon's International Port of Coos Bay. This project, along with the associated Pacific Connector Pipeline, is of critical interest to virtually everyone in this region.

JCEP, when built, will increase the taxable asset base of Coos County by more than \$6 billion, one and one half times its current level. Naturally, between enterprise zones and other property tax incentives to business available at the state level our schools, public safety and county governments will not reap the full benefit of that increase right away but it will immediately, by treaty with JCEP, bring an additional \$25 - \$30 million per year to support these institutions.

The demise of our historical timber industry, largely due to the ban on cutting timber on federal lands, Coos County is rapidly becoming Appalachia West. Over 50% of our children now qualify for federally funded meals in school. We have the highest level of drug abuse in the state and our unemployment rate is 40% higher than the national average. Poverty begets, more poverty and poverty results largely when there are insufficient jobs for people to earn their way out.

The JCEP will provide many benefits both locally and nationally. Locally, it will provide a huge boost to the economy through the construction phase but more importantly it will provide meaningful, well-paying direct jobs for well over 100 people and with the multiplier effect, an additional 200 plus. In a county with 63,000 population, half of which are over 55, that is significant. Moreover, the JCEP would likely be a linchpin for the further development, expansion and modernization of our deep water port, the closest port to Asian markets in the lower 48 states.

Nationally, the benefits are straight forward. We become an exporter of the cleanest hydrocarbon fuel available. The more we encourage the world to use natural gas in place of other hydrocarbon based fuels, the better off the planet is. Add to that the obvious benefit to our balance of payments situation and we all win. Some will say that if we export our energy the cost to domestic consumers will rise. That may in fact be true, for a while. The domestic market currently is a little over \$2 per MCF, about the same price it was 25 years ago. The gas market domestically has historically been boom to bust and back to boom. It wasn't so long ago that gas was \$6 per MCF. The swings are due to supply and demand shifts. By expanding our markets we will tend to smooth out the boom/bust cycle and help to stabilize pricing for the domestic market. Even if it means a modest increase in the short term, it could mean a good bit less of a shock when the price swings the other way.

Because of this project's vital importance to both our region and our nation we urge you approve the application now before you and allow the JCEP project to go forward.

Respectfully,

Jon A. Barton