

# United States Senate

November 2, 2020

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

President Macron:

Last week, the French government intervened in a commercial agreement between a United States liquefied natural gas (LNG) company and French power company Engie. Reports suggest the French government delayed and possibly canceled the contract based on misplaced environmental concerns about U.S. LNG. If reports are true, the intervention could have negative implications for the future of trade between our two great countries. I write to express concern with the French government's decision to intervene in this matter and urge you to let the negotiations proceed.

The United States has the ability to provide France with access to the cleanest and most efficient source of natural gas in the world. Importing more U.S. LNG strengthens the U.S.-France trade relationship and provides France significant environmental and geopolitical benefits.

America leads the world in reducing carbon emissions—a point recently acknowledged by Dr. Fatih Birol, head of the International Energy Agency.<sup>1</sup> Much of this success domestically is due to the United States' development and use of natural gas. Importantly, the U.S. has one of the lowest flaring intensity levels in the world<sup>2</sup> and methane emissions from U.S. natural gas production have decreased nearly 25 percent since 1990—all while natural gas production grew more than 70 percent.<sup>3</sup> The export of U.S. LNG can bring these same climate benefits to the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Secretary Perry to Hold a Joint Press Conference With IEA Executive Director Dr. Fatih Birol (Feb. 26, 2019), <https://www.energy.gov/articles/secretary-perry-hold-joint-press-conference-ica-executive-director-dr-fatih-birol>, (“In the last 10 years, the emissions reductions in the United States has been the largest in the history of energy.”).

<sup>2</sup> The World Bank, *Global Gas Flaring Tracker Report*, July 2020, at 7, available at <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/503141595343850009/WB-GGFR-Report-July2020.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency, *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks 1990-2018*, Apr. 13, 2020, at 2-15, available at <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-04/documents/us-ghg-inventory-2020-main-text.pdf>.

World energy usage is projected to increase nearly 50 percent by 2050.<sup>4</sup> While renewables are indeed expected to be the “fastest-growing energy source” to supply the expected growth in energy usage, global natural gas consumption is also projected to increase more than 40 percent.<sup>5</sup>

As natural gas consumption increases around the world and remains a part of France’s energy mix, U.S. LNG exports allow France to reduce its reliance on less efficient energy technologies. According to a 2019 report from the U.S. Department of Energy’s National Energy Technology Lab, U.S. LNG shipped to European markets has 41 percent less lifecycle emissions than if those same countries were to receive natural gas from another predominant producer such as Russia or Algeria. Further, according to a 2020 Eurostat report, the E.U. imported nearly 45 percent of its LNG from Russia in 2019.<sup>6</sup> If the EU replaced these imports with U.S. LNG, the associated global emissions would fall approximately 72 million metric tons annually.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, if Russian gas further displaces cleaner sources like American LNG, greenhouse gas emissions will only increase.

If France’s true objective is to lower carbon emissions from energy imports while ensuring access to a reliable and secure energy source, then the choice is clear: U.S. LNG provides the country the best option compared to its alternatives. I hope the French government will reconsider its decision to intervene in this matter and recognize that the U.S. and France can together embrace a shared energy future that is, through natural gas, based on energy security, reliability, and lowering emissions globally.

Sincerely,



Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator

cc: Ambassador Philippe Etienne

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Energy Information Administration, *EIA projects nearly 50% increase in world energy usage by 2050, led by growth in Asia*, Sep. 24, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> 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](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)

<sup>7</sup> Assuming 35 percent of EU electricity generated from natural gas is sourced from Russia (244 million megawatt hours) and 297 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e lower life-cycle emissions per megawatt hour from U.S. supply.