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January 26, 2015

Dear Representative,

On behalf of our members and supporters, we write today in opposition to H.R. 351, the *LNG Permitting Certainty and Transparency Act*. This bill seeks to expedite liquefied natural gas (LNG) export applications under the guise of creating more stable world energy markets. Instead of accomplishing this goal, H.R. 351 would force the Department of Energy (DOE) to speed through its decision-making process for LNG exports and put both the public interest and our environment at risk. This bill would force DOE to make a decision on an application to construct LNG export terminals within 30 days of either the conclusion of National Environmental Policy Act review or the enactment of H.R. 351, whichever comes last.

Currently, proposed LNG export terminals are reviewed by two federal agencies. DOE determines whether exporting natural gas from a given terminal is in the public interest. For exports to countries with which the U.S. has entered into a free trade agreement (FTA), DOE automatically deems the export to be in the public interest and grants the application. For export to non-FTA countries, DOE reviews whether the specific proposal is consistent with the public interest, considering economic impacts, international impacts, security of natural gas supply, and environmental impacts, among other factors. While DOE considers whether to authorize the export of natural gas, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) considers applications to construct and operate the export terminal.

Decisions on LNG export projects will have impacts beyond the site of each terminal. Expanding LNG exports will lead to increased fracking, a process during which drillers blast millions of gallons of chemically treated water into the earth to force oil and gas from underground deposits. Fracking is already being used to extract gas on public lands, near schools and playgrounds, and even in people's backyards. This practice pollutes our air and our water and is connected to a number of health problems that people living in gas fields regularly experience. LNG also has tremendous greenhouse gas impacts, because of domestic gas infrastructure's leakage of methane and because of the additional emissions from liquefaction and shipping.

Pound-for-pound, methane leaked by the oil and gas industry is 87 times more potent than carbon dioxide at trapping heat over 20 years. This methane (and other harmful hydrocarbons) is leaking at significantly higher rates than officials estimate. The most conservative estimate from atmospheric measurements is that natural gas leakage in 2010, averaged over the country that year, amounted to over three percent of U.S. production. Recent studies in Pennsylvania suggest some wells are leaking 1,000 times more methane and other hydrocarbons than EPA assumes when coming up with its estimates of emissions.

A few key facts:

- Drinking water contaminated: In 2012 alone, fracking operations produced 280 billion gallons of toxic waste across the country. Laced with cancer-causing and even radioactive material, this waste has contaminated drinking water sources from Pennsylvania to New Mexico.
- Forests and parks at risk: From Chaco Canyon in New Mexico, to Mesa Verde in Colorado, to the George Washington National Forest in Virginia, and the Delaware River Basin, our national forests and places near our national parks and drinking water sources are at risk of irreparable damage and contamination from expanded fracking.
- Scope of the problem: At least 141 million acres have already been leased for oil and gas production—equal to the size of California and Florida combined.

Meanwhile, fracking still remains exempt from key provisions of our nation’s bedrock environmental laws— including the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and our nation’s hazardous waste law, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) — leaving communities and our environment without the protections they deserve.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to oppose H.R. 351.

Sincerely,

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