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Key Messages on H.R. 7176, the Republican Plan to Increase Americans' Energy Bills

ENERGY & COMMERCE COMMITTEE DEMOCRATS

This week, House Republicans will consider H.R. 7176, the so-called “Unlocking our Domestic LNG Potential Act,” which removes the requirement that the Department of Energy (DOE) find liquified natural gas (LNG) exports to be in the public interest before approving export applications.

This Republican bill is a giant handout to Big Oil and Gas that will enrich our adversaries, including China, and force middle-class families to pay the price with higher home energy costs.

- H.R. 7176 *removes* the requirement that DOE first determine LNG exports to be in the public interest before approving export applications to non-free trade agreement countries.
- The Republicans' bill assumes that *all* LNG exports are automatically in the public interest. This is absurd considering [multiple analyses have found](#) that increased LNG exports directly lead to higher natural gas prices here at home.
- If this bill passes, Americans will pay more for the gas that heats their homes and keeps their lights on.
 - High LNG exports [come with a price](#): according to the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, LNG exports cost American consumers [more than \\$100 billion](#) over a 16-month period.
 - After *doubling* our LNG exports the last five years, natural gas prices in 2022 [more than tripled](#).
- By removing such crucial safeguards, this bill would create a wild west, allowing our adversaries, like China, to purchase even more of our energy to use against us.
 - In 2015, Republicans [pushed through a plan](#) to allow unlimited exports of American crude oil. Because of that, no matter how much oil we produce, Russia and other rivals can manipulate the price of oil. This bill would simply ensure that domestic natural gas prices are also subject to the whims of Vladimir Putin.
 - This is the same playbook the Republicans ran when they repealed the crude oil export ban. After that repeal went through, oil exports to China increased from 420,000 barrels per year to over *160 million barrels per year* last year.
 - [According to the Energy Information Administration](#), in 2021, China was the *second-most popular* destination for American LNG.
 - The largest LNG company in the United States, Cheniere, recently [put out a press release bragging](#) that its planned expansion of its Sabine Pass terminal would supply a Chinese company for 20 years.
 - Republicans [consistently defend](#) raising prices on Americans in order to send our LNG to China.
 - This is an affront to middle-class Americans who have already had to deal with volatile fossil fuel costs and gas prices being manipulated by OPEC.
- This bill puts the interests of [Big Oil and Gas](#) corporations over the interests of the American people. These companies already enjoy billions in taxpayer-funded subsidies and continue to rake in record-breaking profits since Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

This is the *third time* Republicans have brought this bill to the House Floor. It's never been more clear that Republicans are out of ideas and incapable of governing.

- Republicans' repeated return to this bill is an attempt to distract from the fact they have no new ideas, create chaos on the House floor, and push political stunts that will not benefit the American people.
- Despite re-introducing this bill [three separate times](#) this Congress, Republicans have been unable to propose any version of this policy that stands a chance of becoming law.
 - The bill was included in H.R. 1, the *Polluters Over People Act*.
 - The bill was included in the Republicans' *Default on America Act*.
 - Republicans attempted to pass the bill as a standalone measure in September *but couldn't even manage to pass the rule*.
- The bottom line is that extreme Republicans simply have the wrong priorities. They are too busy playing political games and pushing a radical agenda that puts polluters over people.

Last month, President Biden announced a temporary pause in DOE's approval of LNG exports while DOE completes a public interest analysis. DOE's updated public interest determination is an opportunity to take long-overdue action to make sure additional exports benefit Americans. This Republican bill would kill all efforts to ensure that exporting our LNG is in Americans' best interests.

- The pause only applies to *new* export applications. It does not impact currently-operating export capacity, does not impact capacity that is under construction, and does not impact capacity that is permitted but has not yet started construction.
 - Even if DOE never approved another permit, our LNG exports are still on track *to triple* from now until the end of the decade.
- The United States is *by far* the largest natural gas producer in the world: we account [for nearly 25 percent](#) of the world's production every day, outproducing the next two biggest producers *combined*. Before we send our energy resources abroad, it is only right that we first confirm doing so will benefit Americans.
 - H.R. 7176 wouldn't simply undo DOE's recent actions: it would *completely remove* DOE's authority to review whether LNG exports are in Americans' best interests.
- President Biden's action builds on the Administration's commitment to lowering energy costs for Americans and protecting them from corporate polluters' practice of putting profits over people.
- DOE's review of its public interest analysis will be the first such review of gas imports *or* exports in 40 years. Furthermore, the data that DOE had been using in its analysis is outdated.
 - DOE last studied the environmental impacts of LNG exports [back in 2014](#), and re-reviewed the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions of exports [in 2019](#).
 - DOE has not studied the economic impacts of LNG exports [since 2018](#) – back when LNG exports were nearly four times less than they are now.
- The greenhouse gas emissions attributable to LNG exports [are highly uncertain](#), and largely depend upon assumptions around methane leakage and where the LNG will be consumed. It is critical that DOE has the opportunity to better assess and understand the impact of these emissions.
- As the [largest exporter of LNG in the world](#), our current capacity has kept Europe's lights on since the invasion of Ukraine. Meanwhile, House Republicans have steadfastly refused to aid our Ukrainian allies in their struggle for survival.
 - If Republicans were serious about helping our European allies, they would vote for a standalone Ukraine aid package rather than complain about LNG exports that would not reach Europe for at least five years.