



## What They're Saying:

# International Leaders Concerned Over Biden Admin Freezing LNG Export Authority

February 2024

### Foreign Leaders & Governments

- "What's certain is that in the current geopolitical environment, we're counting a lot on American gas," **Olivier Becht, France's minister delegate for foreign trade**. *Wall Street Journal*, "[America's Gas Bonanza Brings Biden new Political Dilemmas](#)" (Jan. 12, 2024)
- "Some Japanese companies have already concluded offtake contracts for LNG that is scheduled to receive approval and begin production in the U.S. Therefore, we are concerned that the temporary suspension of export permits will delay the start of new LNG production from the US. We would like to carefully examine the medium to long-term impact of the issue and take necessary steps to ensure that Japan's stable energy supply is not compromised." **Ken Saito, Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry**, *Reuters*, "[Japan worried US pause of LNG export approvals may delay new projects](#)." (Jan. 30, 2024)
- "Europe will have to rely on US fossil fuels for decades to come as it races to diversify from Russian natural gas and scale up its renewables sector to boost energy security, the EU's top energy official has said. **Ditte Juul Jørgensen told the Financial Times that ... the bloc's reliance on exports of US liquefied natural gas would persist**. 'We will need some fossil molecules in the system over the coming couple of decades. And in that context, there will be a need for American energy,' said Jørgensen, director-general for energy in the European Commission, in an interview in New York." *Financial Times*, "[Top EU Energy Official Says US Gas Will Be Needed For Decades](#)," (Sep. 24, 2023)
- The **German ministry for the economy and climate** said the country's current security of supply would not be interrupted by Biden's announcement. Questions have nevertheless been raised about what the halt might mean for plans to significantly increase LNG imports in the future. "We are closely monitoring the situation in the USA. We can't make any assessments yet because we don't speculate." *Financial Times*, "[Joe Biden halts permits for LNG projects under climate campaign pressure](#)" (Jan. 26, 2024)

### International Organizations & Companies

- "We urge you to reconsider this decision in light of the unique and vital role of American natural gas in meeting the critical energy security and Paris Agreement objectives that our nations share. With respect to security of supply, the critical importance of U.S. LNG in helping



Europe and Japan diversify away from dependence on Russia is well understood. In the aftermath of Russia's unwarranted invasion of Ukraine, these crucial supplies helped the people of Europe and Japan heat and power their homes, factories, and businesses at a time of great need and uncertainty. Further diversification is necessary, and with numerous forecasts projecting global natural gas demand to rise well into the next decade, additional supplies of LNG will be needed to supply world markets. ... Ensuring the world's leading democracies have access to stable and secure supplies of energy is a geopolitical and economic imperative, while cleaner natural gas provides the environmental opportunity to continue progress on emissions reductions." [U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Business Europe, Keidanren joint letter](#) (Jan. 26, 2024)

- "If additional US LNG export capacities don't materialize it would risk increasing and prolonging the global supply imbalance. This would inevitably prolong the period of price volatility in Europe and could lead to price increases with the consequent implications that would have for economic turmoil and social impact." **Eurogas**, "[Eurogas Statement: US LNG Exports to Europe contribute to security of supply, the energy transition and both economies.](#)" (Jan. 17, 2024)

- An **official at Japan's trade ministry** said that the government is concerned about the possibility of delays at facilities that haven't yet gained approval. While Japan doesn't see an immediate impact on LNG procurement, the government is in talks with its US counterparts, he added. *Bloomberg News*, "[Biden Urged to Reverse LNG Pause by Global Business Groups](#)" (Jan. 29, 2024)

- "German state-owned **Securing Energy for Europe GmbH (SEFE)**'s long-term LNG purchased from CP2 LNG will now be vital to Germany's energy security, in the new environment where gas pipeline supplies from Russia have stopped. Germany is now urgently relying on the United States of America to provide much needed LNG supplies for our people which will be used for domestic gas, for the electricity we consume originating from gas-fired power plants or for our industries." *Reuters*, "[Germany's SEFE seeks US approval for Venture Global's CP2 LNG project](#)" (Dec. 14, 2023)

- "This LNG has been a relief for Europe and contributed to the stabilization of gas and electricity prices in Europe for consumers, after a long period of record high prices caused by the Russian supply drop...A lack of additional U.S. gas-export capacity would risk increasing and prolonging the global supply imbalance," **Didier Holleaux, President of Trade Association EuroGas**. *Politico*, "[US Rethinks Gas Exports, spooking Europe](#)" (Jan. 19, 2024)

- **Securing Energy for Europe**, a large state-owned energy company in Germany, wrote to US regulators in December urging them to approve Venture's CP2, arguing it was "vital to Germany's energy security". **Japanese power company Jera** wrote a similar letter in support of CP2. *Financial Times*, "[US Energy Security Role in Question as Gas Exports Receive New Scrutiny](#)" (Jan. 17, 2024)

- **Japan's Inpex Corp**, one of the buyers from the CP2 project, said over email that the fuel would help "contribute to the stability of energy markets in Japan, Asia and elsewhere." Ineos, which has a deal to buy larger volumes from the already approved phase 1 of Port



Arthur, said the review wouldn't impact that, but added that, "Europe will still require gas to replace coal." *Bloomberg*, "[Europe Faces Chill as Biden Freezes New LNG Export Permits](#)" (Jan. 26, 2024)

- "The fact that the newly acquired LNG does not yet fully compensate for the gas previously sourced from Russia underscores the critical need for ongoing and augmented LNG imports from the US. Furthermore, additional volumes of US LNG are crucial for European energy security, particularly in the face of potential future supply shortfalls due to geopolitical instability and reduced domestic production. The possibility of additional US LNG export capacities not materializing raises concerns about exacerbating the global supply imbalance, potentially extending the period of price volatility in Europe and leading to increased prices. This could have severe implications for economic stability and social impact. In the two years following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Europe has worked tirelessly to secure the price stability of natural gas, with significant contributions from like-minded countries, including the United States. It is essential for the US to continue standing with Europe, particularly during a time of war, where we are united in protecting our shared values." **Zukunft Gas (German gas industry association)**

- "The current dynamic we are seeing unfold is highly worrying. It is eroding these fundamental market principles and will harm global energy security and emission reduction" said **Menelaos (Mel) Ydreos, Secretary General of the International Gas Union.** "Restoring global LNG supply balance and energy security requires the current and forecasted shortfall to be addressed...current levels of investment and off-take agreements are still falling short of the growing global demand." International Gas Union Press Release – "[Halt of key US LNG export projects review sends an unsettling signal to global energy markets](#)" (Jan. 30, 2024).

- "We are not aware of any immediate affect from the US action," **JERA head of global investor relations Tetsuo Yoshida** told a news conference. "But the US is the world's largest LNG exporter, so if this issue persists. It could affect the LNG security not only for us, but also for Japan and the world." *TimesLive*, "[US LNG export permit pause may affect Japan's fuel security – JERA](#)" (Jan. 31, 2024).

- "[S]lowing down our own exports will not slow worldwide energy demand, which continues to increase. Hamstringing an industry that produces the cleanest oil and natural gas in the world will only open the door for less environmentally responsible producers to fill the void in the market. All the while our nation, which reaps \$1.8 trillion in economic benefits from our domestic oil and natural gas industry that supports 10.8 million jobs, will experience the negative impacts of this decision." [Letter from Energy Workforce and Technology Council and other energy trade associations.](#) (Jan. 30, 2024)

- "Even prior to this policy change, under your administration permits have taken an average of more than 330 days for approval—more than twice as long as during the two previous Administrations. Given the long-term energy security ramifications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in both Europe and Asia, as well as growing demand for affordable, clean energy sources in the developing world, any effort that further delays export authorizations sends the wrong signals to U.S. allies and trading partners around the world." [Letter to President Biden](#)



[from U.S. Chamber of Commerce and coalition of natural gas stakeholder groups](#) (Jan. 26, 2024)

- “The data is clear – without a steady increase in US LNG supplies, Europe will be unable to substitute Russian gas imports in coming years. There simply aren’t enough LNG alternatives out there” said **François-Régis Mouton, Managing Director of IOGP Europe**. “If this measure is extended or made permanent, Europe may well see the return to higher energy costs, a second wave of industrial demand destruction, and an increase in coal-fired power generation and associated emissions.” IOGP Europe Press Release – [“US decision to pause LNG export approvals could put European security of supply at risk”](#) (Jan. 30, 2024).

- “Blocking the export of climate solutions is an especially dangerous precipice, even before factoring in the obvious geopolitical ramifications. The countries that were going to purchase U.S. LNG have their own Nationally Determined Contributions in line with the Paris Accord, and as such are required to consider the climate impacts of the imported LNG in their overall analyses. Presumably they determined that, like virtually all countries that have made meaningful climate progress, natural gas is actually a necessary good for them, and not an unnecessary evil as those behind the Moratorium would have us believe.” – **Toby Rice, CEO, EQT Corporation** – [EQT Letter to Secretary Granholm](#) (Jan. 30, 2024).

- “The decision of the US administration to pause pending approvals has been a surprise for all LNG importers...It sends a negative message in terms of reliability of the US as an energy partner for Europe and the rest of the world. Regarding the role of LNG in the energy transition, it could create the conditions for gas to coal switches.” – **International Group of LNG Importers (GIILNG)**

### **Members of Congress and Elected Officials**

- **Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), chair of the Foreign Relations Committee**, said the White House has to keep European allies in mind who rely on American LNG, especially if Russia and other adversaries look to fill the gap. The Maryland Senator said he believes the forthcoming analysis from the Department of Energy will show that new LNG terminals will in fact be in the public interest. “I do think we have to recognize that there are friendly countries that need better sources of energy,” **Cardin** said. “I think the analysis will show that there is a role for us on LNG going forward.” *E&E News*, [“Democrats divided over Biden’s LNG export pause”](#) (February 2, 2024).

- **Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV)**: “If this pause is just another political ploy to pander to keep-it-in-the-ground climate activists at the expense of American workers, businesses and our allies in need, I will do everything in my power to end this pause immediately.” – [Press release from Manchin’s website](#) (Jan. 26, 2024).

- “We write regarding the announcement that the Department of Energy (DOE) will stop issuing indefinitely permits to export liquefied natural gas (LNG) while your administration conducts an additional “public interest” review, including environmental, economic, and environmental justice criteria. This is economically and strategically dangerous and unnecessary. Under both Democratic and Republican administrations, DOE has consistently



found that U.S. LNG exports serve the “public interest” because they contribute positive economic benefits and strengthen energy security for the American people, and also have the potential to reduce global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.” [Letter from House Energy and Commerce Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers and 150 House Republicans](#). (Feb. 5, 2024)

- **Senators John Fetterman (D-PA) and Bob Casey (D-PA)** said in a joint statement to the *Washington Examiner* that “as senators who represent the second largest natural gas-producing state, they were going to push Biden to undo his decision: ‘The industry has created good-paying energy jobs in towns and communities across the commonwealth and has played a critical role in promoting U.S. energy independence.’ The statement said. They said the immediate impact on Pennsylvania remains to be seen, but they have deep concerns about the long-term impact this pause will have on thousands of jobs in Pennsylvania’s natural gas industry.” *Washington Examiner*, [“Even democrats say Biden’s pause on LNG is like ‘throwing a match in a bale of hay’](#)” (Jan. 31, 2024).

- “Continued U.S. leadership in exporting LNG also furthers global emissions goals. Unlike the United States— where methane emissions are modest, regulated, and declining—Russia’s natural gas production facilities and distribution networks are old, largely unregulated, and leaky...If the Biden administration is serious about addressing global climate goals — the easiest way to achieve those goals is to bolster U.S. LNG production and exportation.” [Bipartisan letter from Congresswoman Carol Miller \(R-WV\) and Energy Export Caucus co-chairs](#) (Feb. 5, 2024)

- **Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-AR-4), Chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee:** “It’s a policy that is shortsighted political pandering and will do nothing but drive the cost of energy even higher.” [Financial Times, “A closer look at Joe Biden’s LNG export freeze.”](#) (February 1, 2024).

- It is critical to recognize that U.S. LNG exports are not only good for America, but the use of LNG is directly related to the global community’s ability to meet its emissions reduction goals by 2050. As international markets transition to cleaner energy sources, U.S. LNG provides a viable, cleaner-burning alternative for countries still reliant on coal and other high-intensity fuels. Every molecule of U.S. LNG exported helps limit the growth of global emissions and provides energy security around the world. [Letter from Representative Marc Veasey and 10 House Democrats](#) (Feb. 1, 2024)

- **Former Ohio Democratic Representative Tim Ryan**, who retired last year, admitted in a post on X that the halt was “a major political issue that the Democrats have just put themselves squarely on the wrong side.” *Washington Examiner*, [“Even democrats say Biden’s pause on LNG is like ‘throwing a match in a bale of hay’](#)” (Jan. 31, 2024).

- **Former Texas Governor Rick Perry:** “Unfortunately, the Biden administration refuses to acknowledge the importance of strong domestic energy production to U.S. national security and is playing into our adversaries’ hands by prioritizing appeasement of environmentalist groups - even those backed by China - over the long-term strength and security of our nation,” Perry wrote. “It’s imperative to reverse these actions and return to the path of energy independence. Our focus must shift towards domestic oil and gas production, characterized by the world’s



strictest environmental standards, to bolster energy security, support the American workforce, and stimulate economic growth." *Fox Business*, "[Biden Angers fossil fuel proponents with 'devastating' move to halt natural gas projects](#)" (February 1, 2024).

- In a letter to the DOE, **Commissioner Dawn Buckingham of Texas General Land Office** said that "It's unconscionable that our own federal government would take such drastic steps with the goal of shutting down this thriving industry. Biden's ban on LNG will do nothing more than put our economy, job availability, and national security at risk." *Fox Business*, "[Texas official blasts Biden admin for LNG export pause, warns millions of jobs at risk: 'war on energy'](#)", (Jan. 31, 2024)

- "This is surprising. It's disappointing. It's alarming. It's completely contrary to the President's own climate goals. When you stop exporting cleaner natural gas from the United States, you only encourage countries all over the world to use more coal. He's breaking his promise to our democratic allies. At a time when he's asking Republicans in Congress to support money to the Ukraine, he's pulling the rug out from under Ukraine. It doesn't make any sense...this doesn't make sense from his environmental agenda. Natural gas is part of the solution, not the problem. Natural gas is cleaner than coal...and President Biden knows this. So I don't know who President Biden thinks he's helping or enticing to support him. This is contrary to his climate goals." – [CNBC Interview](#) with **Former Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA)** (Jan. 25, 2024).

### **Energy Policy Experts**

- "No one hates U.S. L.N.G. more than Vladimir Putin," said **Daniel Yergin**, the vice chairman of S&P Global and an oil industry historian. *The New York Times*, "[White House Said to Delay Decision on Enormous Natural Gas Export Terminal](#)" (Jan. 24, 2024)

- "An honest approach to evaluating the climate and geopolitical impacts of LNG facilities would take into account the climate costs of mining more coal, burning more coal and using coal as a chemical feedstock. A fair test would acknowledge air pollution differences and [coal mine methane leaks that exceed natural gas methane emissions by likely underestimated official measurements](#). It would account for the boon to Putin if U.S. LNG shipments to Europe and Asia declined, sending those markets back into the fold of the Russian petrostate." **Progressive Policy Institute**, "[Uncompromising Activism: The New Threat to the Environment, Geopolitics, and the Biden Administration](#)" (January 26, 2024)

- "Every leader has to play politics, but there are certain things that are too important to be touched," said **Brenda Shaffer**, an energy expert at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School. "It is so critical for the economic viability of Asia and Europe and the national security of Europe. It's like Thelma and Louise driving off the cliff—it makes no sense to reduce supply." *Foreign Policy*, "[Why Biden's LNG Pause Has Allies Worried](#)" (Feb. 1, 2024).

- "The idea that delaying American LNG projects is a huge win for climate activists is so, so short sighted — it is a win for coal miners (and for Qatar)" – **Javier Blas, Bloomberg**



- “Recent events demonstrated the unique aspects of U.S. LNG. Russia’s curtailment of pipeline gas supplies led to a dramatic increase in European gas and electricity prices in the second half of 2021, and its war on Ukraine since February 2022 created even more severe challenges. Strong price signals in Europe attracted supply, and European LNG imports rose by 60 percent in 2022. U.S. LNG met much of this demand. Although Asia had previously been the main destination for U.S. LNG exports, about two-thirds of cargoes over the past two years ended up in Europe. Without growing volumes and flexible supplies from the United States, it would have been much more challenging to accommodate these shocks, and there would have been a massive price discrepancy in the Atlantic and Pacific basins. The United States now plays a critical balancing role in the global LNG market, adding supply and flexibility that has boosted global energy security.” [Ben Cahill, “U.S. LNG Export Boom: Defining National Interests,” Center for Strategic & International Studies, Jan. 11, 2024](#)

### **Other Voices**

- “It is very important to be able to provide that kind of fuel ... to our allies,” **former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta** told the House Select Committee on Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party. “Because they’ve joined with the United States, they have lost the ability to have to rely on Russian energy -- that’s a good thing,” *Nikkei Asia*, [“Biden’s LNG pause will hurt allies, ex-officials tell Congress”](#) (Jan 31, 2024).

- The main short-run damage the administration’s obviously political decision does is to the United States’ reputation for rational, fact-based policymaking, and for wise consideration of climate control in the context of geopolitics. You cannot change demand for energy by destroying supply: If the United States did indeed curtail LNG exports, it would just drive customers into the arms of competitors such as Australia, Qatar, Algeria and, yes, Russia. Quite possibly, some potential customers would choose to meet their needs with coal instead. [Washington Post editorial, “Biden’s LNG Decision is a Win for Political Symbolism, Not the Climate”](#) (Jan. 29, 2024)

- “Russia, Iran and Qatar are expanding their export capacities. By the way, Russia last year supplied Europe with almost as much gas as the U.S. The White House says its pause won’t jeopardize supply to Europe, but energy officials across the pond disagree. Germany accounted for a third or more of the contracted capacity of a large planned Gulf Coast LNG project. Nobody in the White House seems to understand that countries sign long-term contracts years in advance so they can plan their energy infrastructure and needs. They won’t build new gas plants or import terminals without supply locked in—or they will turn to more reliable sources. Russia now looks like a more reliable energy source than the U.S.” Wall Street Journal editorial, [Biden and the TikTok Anti-LNG Crusade - WSJ](#) (Jan. 24, 2024)

- “The Administration is deliberately creating uncertainty about permit approvals and extensions to chill investment and discourage foreign governments from signing long-term contracts. Why risk investing in or signing a purchase agreement with a Gulf Coast project that may later be killed? Smarter to link up with the Qataris. That’s what some are already doing. Japanese trading house [Mitsui](#) & Co is considering buying a stake in a major Qatar expansion project to ensure stable LNG supply, according to a Reuters report last autumn. Japan’s largest power generator is in talks with Qatar for a long-term supply contract. These are hedges against



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unreliable U.S. energy policy. Wall Street Journal editorial, [Biden's Worst Energy Decision - WSJ](#) (Feb. 5, 2024)