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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6150

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February 11, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

I am an ardent advocate of an all-of-the-above energy policy coupled with technological innovation to solve both our country's energy challenges and the global climate challenge. Responsible production of natural gas and practices like hydraulic fracturing have improved our nation's energy security while supporting the nearly 1.5 million hard working Americans the industry employs, including in rural communities across our great nation. It is my hope that you will consider these benefits as you evaluate the federal oil and gas leasing program and consider other policies and regulations related to the energy industry.

Technologies like hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling have allowed our country to more efficiently tap into our rich, domestic energy resources that reside in the vast shale plays across the country, including in my home state of West Virginia. These technologies catalyzed a "shale revolution" in the U.S. that has propelled a surge in domestic oil and gas production, culminating in the U.S. becoming a net total energy exporter in 2019 for the first time in 67 years. This energy security affords your administration with expanded geopolitical tools and strengthens our national security.

In addition, raw and refined natural gas and natural gas liquids (NGLs) serve as feedstocks for the chemicals, plastics, and synthetic materials that are in nearly everything we use, including PPE, disinfectants, and other medical equipment. Since beginning in 2014, U.S. exports of ethane have increased at least six-fold, with export to China alone accounting for nearly 30% of the increase in 2019. According to the Energy Information Administration, demand for ethane in China is expected to continue to grow with the Made in China 2025 initiative, which aims to increase the share of value-added activity in China in the manufacturing and high-tech industries. We put ourselves at a distinct disadvantage by exporting large quantities of our natural gas liquids and the manufacturing jobs that go along with them to China to then simply import finished

products. As we rebuild and strengthen our economy, I continue to support bringing those supply chains and manufacturing back home to the United States, expanding the domestic jobs supported by our abundant natural gas and reducing our reliance on China.

The U.S. Geological Survey recently estimated that there are still 214 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered, technically recoverable continuous resources of natural gas in the Marcellus and Utica shale formations alone. Responsible production of our abundant resources is critical. That includes using existing technologies and continuing to innovate new ways to reduce methane flaring and leaks from oil and gas systems and expanding our energy infrastructure and gathering lines to instead get that product to market. I also strongly support advancing carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration technologies, including for natural gas applications, to further reduce emissions.

I encourage you to bear in mind these many benefits of responsible domestic natural gas production as you consider any future executive or administrative action, and I look forward to working with you to achieve our shared goals of energy security, economic growth, and global emissions reductions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Manchin III
Chairman