



January 23, 2015

The Honorable Bill Johnson  
United States House of Representatives  
1710 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Johnson:

On behalf of the members of the National Taxpayers Union (NTU), I write to endorse H.R. 351, the “LNG Permitting Certainty and Transparency Act.” This legislation would put in place common-sense deadlines and processes for application review and approval of liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facility operations, as well as increase transparency of LNG export destinations.

As is the case in many other sectors of the energy industry, a lengthy and unnecessarily burdensome regulatory process constrains the enormous economic potential of LNG exports. Allowing exports only to Canada, Mexico, and the handful of other countries with which we have a free trade agreement has hobbled the profitability of our growing domestic natural gas industry. In 2013, domestic consumption of natural gas was flat, indicating limited prospects for ramped-up production to be worthwhile unless new markets are unlocked. Yet, the availability of resources remains on an upward trend, thanks to improved technology.

Fortunately, H.R. 351 provides a streamlined, expedited process that should smooth the path for increased LNG exports, spurring additional development. Only seven years ago, the U.S. imported 16 percent of our natural gas. Based on current projections, we could become a net exporter by 2020. Today we are the number one petroleum and natural gas producer in the world due to revolutionary technologies. To ensure the industry has the economic incentives necessary to continue to thrive, H.R. 351 declares U.S. natural gas open for business.

By more fully entering global markets where regional price disparities create numerous opportunities for U.S. LNG to be profitable, natural gas production could continue to be a source of much-needed jobs and prosperity. In British Columbia, export-led natural gas activity is expected to push economic growth past 4 percent by 2016. Furthermore, a study by NERA Economic Consulting found that across numerous scenarios, “LNG exports provide net economic benefits ... and the greater the level of exports, the greater the benefits.” The report noted that additional investment in LNG export facilities and increased production could help speed economic recovery and put up to “45,000 currently unemployed workers back to work” between now and 2018.

As consumers and taxpayers continue to suffer from the fallout of a still sluggish economy, Congress should move forward to unleash the energy potential that could be key to our future financial and fiscal security. NTU is pleased to endorse the “LNG Permitting Certainty and Transparency Act” and urges all Representatives to cosponsor this legislation.

Sincerely,

Nan Swift  
Federal Affairs Manager