

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051  
MINORITY (202) 225-5074  
<https://oversight.house.gov>

June 28, 2022

The Honorable Richard Glick  
Chairman  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First St., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20426

Dear Chairman Glick:

Committee on Oversight and Reform Republicans are conducting oversight of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) recent draft policy that would significantly diminish American natural gas production. Earlier this year, FERC announced a new policy placing significant barriers within the natural gas pipeline permitting process.<sup>1</sup> When Republicans exposed FERC's action as threatening America's energy independence and national security, particularly given the Russian invasion of Ukraine, FERC reversed course and decided to seek comment from the American public on the policy rather than finalize it. While you claim the White House was not involved in FERC's pipeline policies, reports regarding your calendar indicate that you attended regular meetings with one of President Biden's climate change czars, raising questions about the White House's involvement.<sup>2</sup> On June 16, 2022, at a FERC public meeting you doubled down on the lack of involvement by the "Administration"—yet, questions still remain about your meeting schedule.<sup>3</sup> Now that the average cost of gasoline is \$5 per gallon, it is critical that the American people understand how the federal government formulates policies effecting critical needs like energy.<sup>4</sup> We request documents and information about the involvement of the White House on FERC's questionable natural gas pipeline policy.

New information about the origins of FERC's natural gas pipeline permitting policy call into question your past assurances to the American people that the White House was not involved in its formulation. At a March 3, 2022, hearing before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, you stated "Absolutely not," in response to a question about whether any "higher ups" in the Administration had ever discussed with you efforts to curtail

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<sup>1</sup> FERC, Updated Policy Statement on Certification of New Interstate Natural Gas Facilities, Feb. 18, 2022; FERC, Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Natural Gas Infrastructure Project Reviews, Feb. 18, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> FERC Public Meeting, statement of Commissioner Glick, June 16, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> AAA, Gas Prices, *available at* <https://gasprices.aaa.com/>.

natural gas pipelines.<sup>5</sup> However, documents reviewed by Committee Republicans indicate that you met with Deputy White House National Climate Advisor Ali Zaidi, twice a month from September 2021 until April 2022, a critical time for the formulation of FERC's pipeline policy.<sup>6</sup> The American people deserve to know whether the White House is responsible for the formulation of policies that increase energy costs. Some speculate that the soaring prices at the pump are contrived by this Administration to deter Americans from driving cars.<sup>7</sup> President Biden has even declared that high gas prices are an "incredible transition" Americans must go through.<sup>8</sup> Americans deserve to know why you, as head of the Commission charged with approving critical energy products, would fail to disclose such meetings to Congress.

Unfortunately, it is no surprise that the White House would be in close coordination with your office on efforts to curb natural gas pipelines. This policy follows the pattern of previous Biden Administration actions that reduce American energy independence. On his first day in office, President Biden rescinded the Keystone XL pipeline permit via executive order.<sup>9</sup> In the midst of the highest inflation in history, this Administration continues to limit leasing for oil and gas projects on federal lands and vilify domestic producers.<sup>10</sup> The latest FERC policy will halt important pipeline projects and increase American reliance on foreign energy sources. Expanding American energy dependence on foreign countries is a national security threat, especially in times of global conflict.<sup>11</sup> It also props up communist and autocratic regimes.

With energy prices soaring and costs rising every day for the American people, it is now more important than ever that we hold appointed officials in the Biden Administration accountable for actions that do not improve the lives of our citizens but instead raise prices on American consumers. To assist in shining a light on the involvement of the White House in FERC policy, Committee Republicans request you provide all documents and communications between you and the White House Office of Domestic Climate Policy from January 2021 to the present, no later than July 12, 2022.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. To make arrangements to deliver documents or ask any related follow-up questions, please contact the Republican staff at (202) 225-5704. The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

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<sup>5</sup> *Hearing to Review FERC's Recent Guidance on Natural Gas Pipelines: Hearing Before S. Comm. on Energy & Natural Resources*, testimony of Hon. Richard Glick, Commissioner, FERC, 117<sup>th</sup> Cong. (Mar. 3, 2022)

<sup>6</sup> Document on file with Committee Republicans.

<sup>7</sup> Marc Thiessen, *Gas Prices are Through the Roof. That's Just How Biden Wants It.*, Wash. Post, May 31, 2022. /

<sup>8</sup> Adam Sabes, *President Biden Seems to Praise High Gas Prices as 'Incredible Transition' Americans Must Go Through*, Fox News, May 24, 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Exec. Order No. 13990, 86 Fed. Reg. 7037 (Jan. 20, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Associated Press, *Biden Increases Oil Royalty Rate and Scales Back Lease Sales on Federal Land*, Apr. 16, 2022.

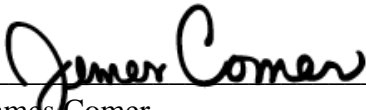
<sup>11</sup> The WSJ Editorial Board, *Biden's Regulators Empower Putin*, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, Feb. 18, 2022.

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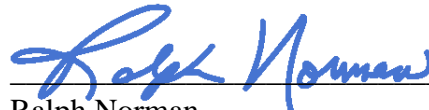
Sincerely,



James Comer

Ranking Member

Committee on Oversight and Reform



Ralph Norman

Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Environment

cc: The Honorable Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman  
House Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Ro Khanna, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Environment