

# 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>

December 4, 2022

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Secretary Granholm:

We write requesting information regarding the Biden Administration's role in skyrocketing energy prices this winter. Throughout the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, Committee Republicans have expressed alarm as the Biden Administration sets policy that has starved international markets of crucial fuel supply streams and plunged the world further into a global energy shortage.<sup>1</sup> Rather than turn to the easiest, safest, cleanest, and cheapest solution—unleashing American energy—President Biden has villainized domestic energy producers for the rampant supply shortages and runaway prices his own policies created. As we have previously requested, we again ask that you provide information related to the high energy costs Americans expect to endure this winter.

Our October 28, 2021, letter raised concerns that climbing energy prices were on track to strain American finances in the coming winter months.<sup>2</sup> Now, over a year later, the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) predicts that consumers could spend as much as 51 percent more than they did last year to heat their homes from October 2022 through March 2023.<sup>3</sup> Households on the East Coast could pay 45 percent more than last year for heating oil, mainly due to the lack of pipelines that exclude the region from access to cheaper forms of energy.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, regional stockpiles of diesel and heating oil are at their lowest levels in recorded history.<sup>5</sup> Without sufficient energy stockpiles and proper infrastructure, energy prices will continue to soar.

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g., Letter from James Comer, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, et al. to Jennifer Granholm, Sec'y, Dep't of Energy (May 26, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Energy Information Admin., *Winter Fuels Outlook, October 2022* (Nov. 8, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> David Uberti, *Heating New England's Homes Will Be Expensive This Winter*, WALL STREET JOURNAL (Nov. 15, 2022).

<sup>5</sup> Tsvetana Paraskova, *U.S. Diesel Inventories Hit Historic Lows At The Worst Possible Time*, OILPRICE.COM (Nov. 17, 2022).

At a recent campaign event, President Biden said: “We’re gonna be shutting these [coal plants] down all across America and having wind and solar.”<sup>6</sup> This sentiment has been reflected in President Biden’s actions since the first day he took office. To the detriment of the American workers and consumers, he shut down the Keystone XL pipeline and launched executive orders attacking the oil and gas industry. However, fossil fuels like coal remain necessary to power Americans through the coming winter months. According to the EIA, fossil fuels are the largest sources of energy for electrical power, with coal as the second largest source at 22 percent of the energy mix.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately for Americans, “Green New Deal” style regulations are shutting down these power plants.<sup>8</sup> Massive spending packages like the Inflation Reduction Act further punish these companies by disfavoring investment in fossil fuels. The American people deserve to know the Administration’s plan—if there is a plan—for keeping energy costs low when the federal government is taking away the most available, affordable, and clean energy sources before winter.

In order to better understand the Biden Administration’s approach to reducing energy costs, by December 19, 2022, please provide the following documents and information for the time frame January 20, 2021, to present:

1. All projections of consumer energy costs created by the Department of Energy (DOE);
2. All documents and communications referring or relating to the Biden Administration’s strategy to reduce energy costs;
3. All documents and communications referring or relating to the Biden Administration’s cost analysis of shutting down coal plants; and
4. All documents and communications between or among DOE staff and nongovernment groups referring or relating to energy costs.

To schedule delivery of responsive documents or ask any follow-up questions, please contact Committee on Oversight and Reform Republican staff at (202) 225-5074. 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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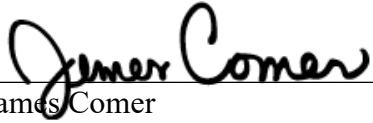
<sup>6</sup> Caroline Downey, *Biden Vows to Shut Down Coal Plants ‘All Across America’*, NATIONAL REVIEW (Nov. 5, 2022).

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Energy Information Admin., *Electricity Explained* (last visited Nov. 22, 2022).

<sup>8</sup> See Thomas Catenacci, *Eco regulations force massive coal plant to shut down, sparking community uproar*, FOX NEWS (Nov. 2, 2022).

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm  
December 4, 2022  
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Comer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

James Comer  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight and Reform

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