

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

1615 H STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000
202/463-5310

December 1, 2015

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations, and dedicated to promoting, protecting, and defending America's free enterprise system, supports H.R. 8, the "North American Energy Security and Infrastructure Act of 2015."

This legislation addresses many important energy policy issues in a serious and thoughtful manner, representing the product of many hearings over several years. While the Chamber believes some improvements could be made to the bill to promote greater efficiency, we support its overall impact in terms of making energy efficiency a key part of our comprehensive energy strategy.

Due to the tremendous increases in the production of oil and natural gas over the past decade, no policy area requires more updating than trade policy surrounding both energy sources. H.R. 8 represents an important first step in addressing natural gas trade policy by ensuring prompt decisions from the Department of Energy on license applications for the exportation of LNG. America's tremendous natural gas resources enable exports, and the economic benefits they generate domestically, without impacting prices or threatening U.S. energy security.

Another necessary update to energy trade policy is lifting the 40 year-old ban on exporting U.S. crude. The Chamber strongly supports an amendment expected to be offered by Representative Joe Barton, which would lift the ban, mirroring H.R. 702, a bill, "[t]o adapt to changing crude oil market conditions," which was passed by the House of Representatives in October with strong bipartisan support.

One of the concerns that many have voiced about exporting U.S. oil is the impact on consumers. Thankfully, this question has been investigated thoroughly by the Energy Information Administration and Government Accountability Office, as well as several think tanks and independent energy analysts, and every report has concluded that exporting U.S. crude would cause gasoline prices to decline, not increase.

Allowing U.S. exports would help deleverage countries that use their respective crude oil market dominance to negatively influence countries that must rely on imported oil. The world has witnessed how Russia has used oil and natural gas exports to force countries in Europe and

Asia to acquiesce to its geopolitical and economic demands. Bringing U.S. oil to those markets would not completely displace Russian exports, but would provide a much stronger negotiating position for importers, most of which are strategic U.S. allies. Moreover, at a time when the U.S. government is allowing Iran to begin to exporting oil freely again, U.S. producers should also be able to export oil.

Additionally, the Chamber supports changes to the Federal Building Efficiency mandates created in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 contained in H.R. 8. Eight years of implementing the provision requiring the elimination of fossil fuel-derived energy in federal buildings has demonstrated a litany of unintended consequences. Not only has the country's natural gas resource base nearly doubled, making this clean, economic, and increasingly abundant fuel a preferred energy source, but large efficiency improvements in federal installations have been halted owing to even minor reliance on fossil fuels. Combined heat and power continues to push the envelope of using energy more efficiently while limiting energy waste, and the existing mandate prevents its utilization on the biggest projects where it could yield the most gains.

The Chamber supports H.R. 8 and the Barton amendment. **The Chamber may consider including votes on, or in relation to, this legislation in our annual *How They Voted* scorecard.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bruce Josten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

R. Bruce Josten