

350.org * Alaska Wilderness League * Association of Northwest Steelheaders
Environmental Action * Food and Water Watch * Clean Water Action
CREDO * Earthjustice * ForestEthics * Friends of the Earth
League of Conservation Voters * Natural Resources Defense Council * Oceana
Oil Change International * Sierra Club * Washington Conservation Voters
Washington Environmental Council * Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility

December 1, 2015

Dear Senator,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, we urge you to defend the crude oil export ban from any attempts to repeal, rollback, or introduce exemptions to the existing law. Legislation to lift the export ban represents yet another give-away to the oil industry and would erode progress we've made protecting consumers, the environment, and combating climate change.

Recent reports suggest proponents of eliminating the crude oil export ban are currently attempting to offer small policy concessions in order to secure votes to repeal the ban. **To be clear, there is no conceivable "deal" that would be sufficient for our organizations to withdraw our objections to lifting the crude export ban.**

Specifically, suggestions that include extending clean energy tax incentives in exchange for lifting the ban are particularly untenable. Continued investment in renewable electricity must not come at the cost of the very climate gains we hope to achieve from their expansion. We need to reduce all fossil fuel use, not expand oil production and consumption. Lifting the 40-year restriction on crude oil exports moves the country in exactly the wrong direction.

Lifting the crude oil export ban would imperil consumers, the climate, and our communities. It would incentivize a hazardous increase in oil production in the U.S., which would in turn mean more leaking pipelines, hazardous oil trains, and increased emissions wreaking havoc with our climate.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change¹, among others, have confirmed that to keep climate change under the already dangerous 2 degrees Celsius level, the vast majority of the world's proven fossil fuel reserves must be left in the ground. Repeal of the crude export ban moves our energy policy precisely in the opposite direction of the goals of dramatically reducing our dependence on fossil fuels.

Simply put, we cannot burn all the oil, gas, and coal reserves we have without increasing carbon pollution to dangerous levels. Yet, lifting the ban on crude oil exports will encourage more production and the expansion of known reserves. In March 2014, the American Petroleum Institute (API) analyzed the production impact of lifting the crude

¹Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. IPCC Fifth Assessment: Synthesis Report. November 2014. P 63 http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/AR5_SYR_FINAL_All_Topics.pdf

oil export ban and found that it would increase production by 500,000 bpd.² An analysis conducted by Oil Change International made a similar prediction and estimated an average increase of more than 476,000 bpd by 2020.

Our climate and communities can not afford the hazardous oil production that would come with lifting the crude oil export ban. There is simply no “deal” that would be attractive enough to put our climate and communities at risk.

We urge you to defend the crude oil export ban from attacks. We cannot make the progress we need by taking one step forward and one step backward. As President Obama said a few weeks ago, “Ultimately, if we’re going to prevent large parts of this Earth from becoming not only inhospitable but uninhabitable in our lifetimes, we’re going to have to keep some fossil fuels in the ground rather than burn them and release more dangerous pollution into the sky.”

Sincerely,

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² ICF International and EnSys Energy. “The Impacts of U.S. Crude Oil Exports on Domestic Crude Production, GDP, Employment, Trade, and Consumer Costs The Impacts of U.S. Crude Oil Exports on Domestic Crude Production, GDP, Employment, Trade, and Consumer Costs.” American Petroleum Institute, March 31, 2014. <http://www.api.org/rss/~media/Files/Policy/LNG-Exports/LNG-primer/API-Crude-Exports-Study-by-ICF-3-31-2014.pdf>