

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 29, 2022

Secretary Jennifer Granholm
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Granholm,

With the upcoming winter season comes a real threat to energy reliability for residents and businesses in New England. Global events caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine are exacerbating the risk that the region will not have the fuel supplies needed to maintain heat and power during an extended cold snap. We write to ask that you work with federal, regional, state, and local stakeholders to identify actions available to prevent energy disruption during the coldest months of the year.

Leaders in the region are working hard to reduce our reliance on natural gas by bringing clean energy resources like offshore wind and hydropower online, and the recently passed Inflation Reduction Act will be a huge boost to those efforts. Replacing fossil fuels with clean energy alternatives is the only way to ensure adequate supply and to achieve U.S. energy independence. Building out this new, carbon-free generation, however, will take time. As a result, the region remains reliant on natural gas, liquefied natural gas (LNG) and heating oil to bridge supply gaps during the coldest stretch of New England winters.

ISO New England, the region's grid operator, has warned that colder-than-usual conditions could put the reliability of the grid at risk - perhaps even leading to extreme measures like rolling blackouts. This could be devastating, particularly during the coldest days of winter. While the region's overreliance on natural gas has long been an issue, the continued global disruption caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine means the risk is more urgent than ever. In retaliation for Western sanctions following the invasion, Russia has weaponized energy supplies, reducing gas exports to Europe by 88% compared to 2021. This has led European nations to seek supplies elsewhere, further tightening the global supply. As a result, New England states will face serious challenges as they seek to secure LNG supply.

Even if the lights stay on throughout our winter months, the price instability caused by the region's reliance on the spot market could have devastating impacts on New England residents who already face some of the highest energy costs in the continental U.S.

Given the gravity of these concerns, we urge you to convene key stakeholders, including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), ISO New England, New England governors, public utility officials, generators, suppliers, and utilities to mitigate these risks. Additionally, we ask that you leverage resources within the Department of Energy to identify barriers to bringing non-fossil fuel energy online as quickly as possible. Lastly, we ask that you work across the

Executive Branch to review the emergency powers available to the Department of Energy and other agencies to ensure New England has the resources needed to get through the winter without major supply disruptions or price spikes. We stand ready and willing to assist you in any way.

We appreciate your attention to these concerns and look forward to working with you on this critical issue.

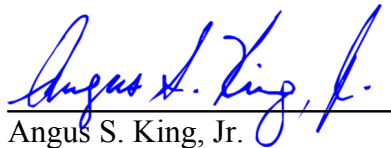
Sincerely,



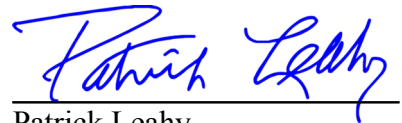
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



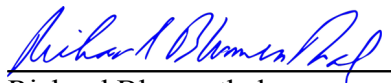
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator