

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 16, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Granholm:

As we enter into the winter months, we write to highlight specific challenges New Hampshire faces as global events continue to stoke volatility in oil and natural gas markets that in turn, impact home heating costs and electricity prices for our constituents. We appreciate your ongoing attention to these concerns and encourage the Administration to speed up deployment of resources Congress has provided through the bipartisan infrastructure law and Inflation Reduction Act that can help lower energy costs. We also urge you to convene stakeholders in our region to plan for potential supply shortages or risks to grid reliability in the event of severe storms or prolonged cold snaps this winter.

As you know, households in New Hampshire and throughout the Northeast rely far more heavily on heating oil than those in other parts of the country, and prices in recent weeks are well above this time last year. These price spikes are particularly frustrating as oil companies reap record profits and pursue stock buybacks rather than investing in increased production that would lead to savings for American consumers.

For those heating with natural gas or electricity, unique circumstances in New England create additional costs and potential reliability risks this year. Electric generation in the region relies heavily on natural gas, and demand now peaks in the winter while competing with residential heating use. This pressure on natural gas supplies leads to a reliance, in part, on imported liquefied natural gas (LNG) to meet needs during times of high demand. Russia's actions in Ukraine and weaponization of energy in Europe have driven global spot prices to new heights. While domestic natural gas prices are far lower due to abundant production, New England does not fully benefit. Major electric utilities in New Hampshire have significantly increased rates for consumers citing high natural gas prices, creating very real hardship for many.

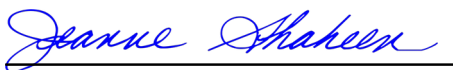
Regardless of fuel source, our constituents need affordable, reliable home heating. Throughout the pandemic, we have worked to secure record funding for home heating assistance, as well as robust investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy that will help individuals and businesses reduce their costs while also lowering peak demand to benefit reliability. Accordingly, we urge you to accelerate deployment of resources and programs from the bipartisan infrastructure law and recently enacted Inflation Reduction Act that will help individuals and businesses use energy more efficiently, install heat pumps, deploy solar energy projects or switch to alternative fuel sources such as biomass or biodiesel. Over the long-term, investments from these laws will help shore up the grid and reduce our reliance on natural gas and oil to help insulate our constituents from price volatility.

Additionally, we ask that you continue to work with federal entities, industry, fuel suppliers, utilities, grid operators, the State and other stakeholders to plan for contingencies should severe weather or prolonged cold snaps threaten electric reliability or fuel supplies in the months ahead. We appreciate the Administration's longstanding focus on potential supply constraints, including your outreach to New England Governors this summer and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) New England winter Gas-Electric Forum

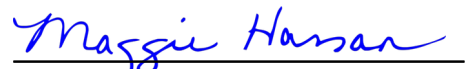
held in September, and we urge additional convening of stakeholders as the winter heating season begins. Should conditions warrant, we also ask that you be prepared to utilize tools within your authorities, including releasing stock from the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve and other emergency authorities, to address acute supply shortages or reliability risks. We would appreciate an update on the ongoing efforts of the Administration related to energy prices and reliability in our region.

We will continue working to ensure Granite Staters have access to reliable, affordable energy this winter and appreciate your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress