

**American Rivers * Clean Water Action * Defenders of Wildlife * Earthjustice
Energy Action Coalition * Environment America * Environmental Defense Fund
Friends of the Earth * League of Conservation Voters * National Audubon Society
National Wildlife Federation * Native American Rights Fund
Natural Resources Defense Council * Oceana * Physicians for Social Responsibility
Population Connection * Sierra Club * Voices for Progress**

January 16, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We applaud the actions you have taken to reduce economy-wide carbon pollution and your commitment last June “to take bold action to reduce carbon pollution” and “lead the world in a coordinated assault on climate change.” We look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve these goals.

In that speech, you referenced that in the past you had put forward an “all of the above” energy strategy, yet noted that we cannot just drill our way out of our energy and climate challenge. We believe that continued reliance on an “all of the above” energy strategy would be fundamentally at odds with your goal of cutting carbon pollution and would undermine our nation’s capacity to respond to the threat of climate disruption. With record-high atmospheric carbon concentrations and the rising threat of extreme heat, drought, wildfires and super storms, America’s energy policies must reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, not simply reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

We understand that the U.S. cannot immediately end its use of fossil fuels and we also appreciate the advantages of being more energy independent. But an “all of the above” approach that places virtually no limits on whether, when, where or how fossil fuels are extracted ignores the impacts of carbon-intensive fuels and is wrong for America’s future. America requires an ambitious energy vision that reduces consumption of these fuels in order to meet the scale of the climate crisis.

An “all of the above” strategy is a compromise that future generations can’t afford. It fails to prioritize clean energy and solutions that have already begun to replace fossil fuels, revitalize American industry, and save Americans money. It increases environmental injustice while it locks in the extraction of fossil fuels that will inevitably lead to a catastrophic climate future. It threatens our health, our homes, our most sensitive public lands, our oceans and our most precious wild places. Such a policy accelerates development of fuel sources that can negate the important progress you’ve already made on lowering U.S. carbon pollution, and it undermines U.S. credibility in the international community.

Mr. President, we were very heartened by your commitment that the climate impacts of the proposed Keystone XL pipeline would be “absolutely critical” to the decision and that it would be

contrary to the “national interest” to approve a project that would “significantly exacerbate the problem of carbon pollution.” We believe that a climate impact lens should be applied to all decisions regarding new fossil fuel development, and urge that a “carbon-reducing clean energy” strategy rather than an “all of the above” strategy become the operative paradigm for your administration’s energy decisions.

In the coming months your administration will be making key decisions regarding fossil fuel development -- including the Keystone XL pipeline, fracking on public lands, and drilling in the Arctic ocean -- that will either set us on a path to achieve the clean energy future we all envision or will significantly exacerbate the problem of carbon pollution. We urge you to make climate impacts and emission increases critical considerations in each of these decisions.

Mr. President, we applaud you for your commitment to tackle the climate crisis and to build an economy powered by energy that is clean, safe, secure, and sustainable.

Sincerely,

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