

# Local 4 OPERATING ENGINEERS

International Union of



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The Honorable John Barrasso  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-6175

The Honorable Tom Carper  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-6175

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper:

On behalf of our almost 5,000 members, I am writing to express my support for expanded energy infrastructure and removing unnecessary regulatory barriers in New England.

New England's energy costs are among the highest in the nation, at approximately 151% above the national average. These high costs are due in part to a lack of fuel supplies needed to heat our homes and businesses in times of peak demand.

One solution to this regional energy crisis is to transport nearby supplies of natural gas to the region, a solution which could lower costs and generate economic growth as businesses and homes are freed from high energy bills. Natural gas is a reliable source of energy and can help relieve this burden to consumers.

While there are many potential benefits of enhanced natural gas infrastructure in our region, development is on hold. States have created unprecedented hurdles to reviewing and permitting projects -- hurdles which have little or nothing to do with the scope of work being proposed. Such actions, seen recently in New York, are staving off infrastructure developments in bordering states. Without change, the region will need to rely on imports of Russian LNG to obtain the fuel needed to meet demand.

Simply clarifying the legal process to prevent states from politicizing the permitting process can go a long way toward addressing New England's energy needs.

Operating Engineers such as ours possess a diverse set of skills, skills that are vital to the construction and operation of a multitude of projects in New England. Commonsense changes to the regulatory system could unleash economic growth and drive new infrastructure development to meet our region's needs.

Sincerely,

William D. McLaughlin  
Business Manager