

United States Senate

September 1, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Burgum:

I write regarding the continued pressure on American energy prices and the need to use every lawful authority available to increase domestic energy production. I commend your August 20 Secretarial Order directing the Department of the Interior to ensure timely completion of reviews under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, identify categories of activities that may be exempted from unnecessary review, and make greater use of alternative approaches to expedite federal decision-making.

Ongoing disruptions to global energy markets and transportation routes due to the Iranian terrorist regime's aggression have demonstrated the danger of allowing American consumers to remain exposed to geopolitical supply shocks. Luckily, the United States possesses abundant oil and natural gas resources. At a time of heightened international instability, federal policy should be focused on bringing additional domestic supply to market as quickly as reasonably possible.

I encourage you to coordinate an administration-wide effort to identify and employ every lawful emergency authority, alternative arrangement, programmatic review, categorical exclusion, and other expedited procedure available to accelerate domestic oil and natural gas development. The Council should also consider whether temporary royalty, rental, lease-extension, suspension, or other relief available under existing law could incent incremental production from existing federal leases. By continuing the Council's systematic approach for maximizing domestic oil and natural gas production, we can keep prices low for Americans.

I commend your leadership in lowering energy costs through expanded leasing, faster permitting, and regulatory relief that supports greater domestic production and energy security. I look forward to working with you on this matter.



Sincerely,

Tom Cotton
United States Senator