



The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

December 13, 2012

Dear Mr. President,

We the undersigned medical and scientific professionals urge the Obama Administration to put a hold on moving forward on the construction of new liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals for the large-scale exportation of shale gas to foreign nations. Our concern is that the Administration has not fully examined the potential for harm to health and the environment that could result.

There is a growing body of evidence that unconventional natural gas extraction from shale (also known as ‘fracking’) may be associated with adverse health risks through exposure to polluted air, water, and soil. Public health researchers and medical professionals question the continuation of current levels of fracking without a full scientific understanding of the health implications. The opening of LNG export facilities would serve to accelerate fracking in the United States in absence of sound scientific assessment, placing policy before health.

As the White House and the Department of Energy contemplate exporting LNG to accommodate international demand for energy, the need for a deliberative process based on sound science is all the more important. We assert that a guiding ethical principle for public policy on fracking should parallel that used by physicians: “First, do not harm.”

There is a need for much more scientific and epidemiologic information about the potential for harm from fracking. To facilitate a rapid increase in fracking in the United States without credible science is irresponsible and could potentially cause undue harm to many Americans.

Without well-designed scientific studies, we will not know the extent of potential harm from fracking. We strongly urge the Administration to err on the side of caution as it contemplates national policy regarding the exportation of shale gas.

The health professionals below sign as individuals and do not necessarily represent the views of their employer.

Sincerely,

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And 108 other health professionals, listed below.

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