

April 10, 2019

The Honorable Rick Perry
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Perry:

I am writing to highlight the important work that the Department of Energy is doing under your guidance in support of a regional natural gas liquids (NGL) storage hub for Appalachia. Your ongoing leadership is a testament to your recognition of the importance of an Appalachian Storage Hub for our nation's energy and economic security.

I was particularly pleased to see the President's Executive Order released today included an examination of the Appalachia region as a prime candidate for economic development in our nation's petrochemical sector. Regional projects like an NGL storage hub are critical to ensuring investment in our nation's energy and manufacturing future – and, most importantly, that Appalachia can play a major role in securing our nation's energy dominance.

It is evident that a regional NGL storage hub serves the nation well. West Virginia and its neighboring states are well positioned to serve as the location of a petrochemical manufacturing hub due to the region's abundant resources of natural gas liquids in the Marcellus and Utica shale formations. The construction of a hub, the associated infrastructure, and ethylene/polyethylene facilities will attract sorely needed economic activity to this undeserved part of the country, which continues to suffer from high unemployment as a result of the downturn in energy and manufacturing production.

Furthermore, you and I have discussed at length the extreme weather events that continue to damage and cause outages to the Gulf's petrochemical industry. A regional hub in Appalachia offers a back-up to the Gulf during hurricanes and flooding so that our nation can maintain a secure supply of materials during these damaging events. So, in addition to economic development and job creation, an Appalachian Storage Hub offers reliability for our domestic industries dependent on ethane and other natural gas liquids.

I would also note that I recently introduced S. 1064, the Appalachian Energy for National Security Act of 2019, which would require the Department of Energy to conduct a study and issue a report on the national security benefits of an Appalachian Storage Hub. In addition to ensuring the region is prepared to responsibly develop the needed infrastructure for a hub, we must also be sure to preserve the national security benefits of these voluminous resources and economic opportunities for the United States.

I applaud your work on the storage hub, and the Department of Energy's contributions to today's Executive Order. I look forward to our continued discussions regarding this critical regional project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator