



Ten Steps Biden Could Take Right Now to Secure American Energy Independence

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March 6, 2022

As gas prices continue to rise to record highs, the disastrous consequences of President Joe Biden's war on American energy have come into full focus. After the United States achieved energy independence and became a net energy exporter for the first time in almost 70 years under President Donald Trump, Biden soon erased all that progress in a matter of weeks with a slew of ill-advised executive actions. But even as the White House attempts to blame Russia for soaring gas bills, Biden has all the tools at his disposal to ease Americans' pain at the pump. Here are 10 measures he could announce right now to restore energy independence and cut U.S. reliance on oil supplies from our chief adversaries.

1. **Withdraw from the Paris Agreement**

On his first day in office, Joe Biden signed an executive order to rejoin the Paris Agreement, a completely one-sided international agreement to reduce carbon emissions. Studies show that the Agreement is doing little to drastically cut carbon emissions or fend off other purported causes of climate change—all while letting countries like China, with significantly higher rates of carbon emissions, sit back and do nothing. More significantly, the Agreement is projected to add an extra \$30,000 in energy costs for the average American family of four over the next 10 years. As domestic energy prices soar, withdrawal from the Agreement would make for a much-needed first step in restoring American energy strength.

2. **Approve the Keystone XL Pipeline and Protect the Michigan Pipeline.**

Also on his first day in office, Biden canceled the Keystone XL pipeline—killing thousands of jobs, while also leaving Americans increasingly dependent on foreign countries for their energy needs. The Laborers' International Union of North America accused Biden of “pandering to environmental extremists” and eliminating “good union jobs” while doing “nothing to replace them.” If Biden wants to prove his commitment to American energy dominance, national security, and job creation, it would behoove him—and the country—to reconsider his day-one cancellation of the Keystone XL pipeline permit.

At the same time, Biden's team has repeatedly teased the possibility of shutting down yet another pipeline in Michigan, which transports more than 500,000 barrels of oil every

day. Much like the shutdown of the Keystone XL pipeline, a closure of the Michigan pipeline would yield disastrous effects for job growth and energy availability throughout the country. By promising to keep existing pipelines open, Biden could go a long way toward assuring Americans that their lights will stay on and their energy bills won't go up any further.

3. **End the War on Coal**

To the surprise of few, Joe Biden has resumed the Obama administration's war on coal. Last year, Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry told far-left climate activists that "we won't have coal" by 2030, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Michael Regan has pursued efforts to revive Obama's Clean Power Plan (CPP), which was developed to combat climate change but has since been blocked by the Supreme Court. Despite the noted ineffectiveness of the CPP in cutting carbon emissions, the EPA's current efforts could close a large swath of coal plants. As the Cato Institute's Chip Knappenberger said of the CPP, "even if the United States stopped emitting all CO2 now and going forward, it would only reduce emissions by 0.15 degrees Celsius—that's all we have to work with." This pattern of rhetoric and policy actions to destroy coal must be brought to a swift end.

4. **Renew Oil and Natural Gas Leases on Federal Lands**

Another easy step Biden could take to calm the mounting energy crisis and project American strength would be to renew the slate of oil and natural gas leases he revoked shortly after taking office. Since becoming president, the Biden administration has stopped new oil and gas leases on federal lands and set in motion a series of arduous "reviews" of existing energy production permits. He has also closed off the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska—one of the largest energy sites in the world that would have brought countless jobs and valuable revenue to the state. Nothing could be worse for American energy than continued cancellation of these permits, and Biden would do well to reverse course as soon as possible.

5. **Relace the UN Climate Change Conference with a new UN Conference on "Energy Abundance and Affordability for Democracy and Freedom"**

The UN's Climate Change Conference (the "Convention of the Parties" ("COP"), first inaugurated in 1995 and continuing annually for more than 26 years to fight "dangerous human interference with the climate system," has become wholly irrelevant and counterproductive to its original purpose. Instead, it has devolved into a system to force the United States to commit unilateral fossil fuel disarmament. Since its founding nearly 30 years ago, the COP system has enabled the authoritarian, nation-destroying goals of leaders like Vladimir Putin. Russia's invasion of Ukraine should be a wake up call. For the sake of protecting freedom and democracy as well as lifting up the living standards of billions of people around the world, COP should be formally replaced at the first opportunity with a UN conference system geared toward developing abundant and affordable supplies of energy, including fossil fuels and nuclear.

6. **Ditch Net-Zero Carbon Emissions as a Goal**

In January, Biden's Pentagon announced a plan to cut carbon emissions by 50 percent by 2030 and reach net-zero emissions by 2050—a sentiment largely echoed by nations in the

European Union. As Rupert Darwall noted in a recent *Real Clear Energy* article, net-zero policies will deepen nations' "dependence on Putin's goodwill as they increase their exposure to unreliable wind and solar, phase out coal, and—in the case of Germany and Belgium—prematurely close their nuclear power stations. Strategically, that's a win for Putin." Until Biden can recognize this basic reality of geopolitics and denounce net-zero policies as environmental strategy, the United States will weaken while Russia and China will grow in strength.

7. Cut Burdensome Energy Regulations

Biden must immediately stop inflicting costly regulations on energy companies. As president, he has directed executive agencies to require energy companies to disclose "climate-related financial risk," which is widely seen as a strategy to promote "divestment" throughout the U.S. energy industry. Instead, Biden should equip the American energy industry with the tools it needs to thrive.

8. Stop Imposing Tax Hikes on Energy Companies

The Biden administration has taken several steps to raise taxes on energy companies: during his first year in office, he proposed plans to cut \$35 billion in tax benefits from the energy industry and to use subsidies to benefit particular kinds of renewable energy. Biden has also toyed with using the Global Intangible Low-Taxed Income (GILTI) provision of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act to double the tax rate on the oil and gas industries from 10.5 percent to 21 percent. Such suggestions send clear signals to the market to stay away from new energy investments. As energy analyst David Blackmon wrote, "It's a fool's game entirely designed as a punitive measure on a disfavored industry, the sort of policy move one would expect to see from authoritarian governments in 3rd world countries." To stimulate new energy production and lower prices of American energy, Biden should be *cutting* taxes, not raising them.

9. Remove Green New Deal Nonsense from Domestic Spending Bills

Democrats should cease all efforts to pass Biden's gargantuan "Build Back Better" spending bill, which is widely perceived to be a backdoor attempt at cramming through the socialist Green New Deal. They should also take swift action to revoke provisions of the so-called "infrastructure" bill that unfairly target the American energy industry. The invasion of Ukraine is the first war caused by the Green New Deal. Biden can help make sure it's the last by eradicating the Green New Deal root and branch from our laws.

10. Halt Plans to Ban Fracking

From the very moment he announced his presidential campaign, Joe Biden has openly flirted with the idea of banning fracking. Even before his inauguration, he vowed there would be "no new fracking," promised to "end fossil fuel," and pledged to "transition away from the oil industry." However, those promises were soon proven both unrealistic and a dangerous threat to national security. Biden – and the country – would be well served by the administration backing off and allowing the American energy sector, including fracking, to thrive.

Though Biden has demonstrated an interest in cutting energy prices and embracing a position of strength as the Russia-Ukraine crisis continues to escalate, he will almost certainly be unable to take action on these promises without taking each of these crucial measures. Pivoting to a pro-American energy position that echoes the platform of the

Trump administration would give Biden a chance to change the narratives of incompetence and weakness that have come to define his presidency thus far. If he fails to do so, the consequences—for American workers, the American economy, and America's strength on the world stage—will be nothing short of catastrophic.