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# More is More: An All-of-the-Above Strategy for America's Energy Cost Crisis

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Americans are struggling to pay for more expensive, less reliable electricity. From Washington to Maine, states have already seen double-digit price increases. This is largely a function of basic supply and demand. The growth of artificial intelligence and increased activity in the manufacturing sector have caused demand to surge, and, with more customers competing for a limited supply of electrons, electricity prices have soared.

The Trump administration has made things much worse by making it harder to add new electricity. They've pushed a de facto ban on wind and solar, raised taxes on clean energy, and slashed essential infrastructure upgrades. And they've doubled down on coal— whose use for electricity has dropped by more than half since 2016—even though it's no longer competitively priced. The Administration has called this approach—a strategy that promises higher prices, rolling blackouts, and rising greenhouse gas emissions—'best of the above.' In reality, it's just fighting America's growing demand crisis with one hand tied behind our backs.

Without intervention, things will only get worse: the Energy Information Agency warns that electricity prices are already outpacing inflation and will continue to rise through 2026. Trump's own Department of Energy reports blackouts could increase 100 times by 2030 if we fail to add more power to our grid. Unless we add *a lot* more new electricity, transmission, and interconnections to our grid *fast*, Americans will get screwed. And the political consequences will be significant.

As the 2026 election cycle kicks into gear, Democrats need strong policy solutions to America's burgeoning demand crisis and messaging that meaningfully addresses voters' concerns about energy affordability and reliability.

But in the face of these mounting challenges, Far Left groups continue to call for unworkable solutions that won't meet our energy needs. Groups like Sunrise Movement, the Democratic Socialists of America, the Center for Biological Diversity, and an array of others continue to call for 100% renewable energy and push the Green New Deal. Even more mainstream

groups like the League of Conservation Voters and the Sierra Club have supported ‘some of the above’ strategies, advocating state-level pushes for 100% renewable energy or decrying essential clean technologies like nuclear and hydropower.

This moment demands strong leadership from Democrats focused on solutions to our energy challenges. **Only an all-of-the-above energy strategy will make America’s energy affordable, reliable, secure, and clean.** We must use every effective resource the US has—including renewables, nuclear, natural gas, geothermal, and hydro—to power our economy and fuel our growth. This is not simply about keeping the lights on for families and individuals. Unreliable electricity will jeopardize our national security and tank our economy.

As Democrats prepare for the fight of our lives in 2026 and 2028, we must loudly, clearly, and persuasively make the case for all-of-the-above and decry in the strongest terms possible the false solutions offered by the Far Left and the MAGA Right.

## The Technical Challenge

Our new challenges—rising costs due to surging demand and insufficient supply—are made worse by old ones. Aging grid infrastructure, burdensome permitting processes, and community opposition and NIMBY-ism make it significantly more challenging to provide the power Americans need and to build significant additional clean power. Balancing these challenges without raising costs and causing service outages for working people will require tradeoffs that neither the MAGA Right nor the Green New Deal supporters on the Far Left are willing to make.

The Administration’s approach ignores several limiting factors that make a ‘fossils only’ or ‘fossils plus nuclear’ strategy unsuited to our current

challenges. First, as we note above, coal is old, dirty, and expensive. The market does not want it. The Administration's continued affinity for coal is, frankly, a fantasy that we cannot afford to indulge.

Second, US natural gas faces a seven-year backlog in orders for gas turbines, bringing new deployment to a crawl and causing costs to spike. The Trump Administration has taken no steps to address the backlog thus far, creating no real impetus for increased production. Indeed, even when the Administration has the right priorities, as they do for nuclear energy, their 'solutions' only exacerbate the problems we face, making it even more challenging to build new energy and creating serious uncertainty for businesses and investors.

Lastly, gas alone is simply not as reliable or price-stable as having a mix of technologies on the grid. A mix of energy sources reduces vulnerability to fuel price volatility and supply disruptions associated with fossil fuels. We saw this play out in real time during Winter Storm Uri, when Texas, then overreliant on natural gas, saw widespread gas power plant failure and didn't have adequate generation from other energy sources to shield against the risk of outages throughout the state.

The same would be true of a grid that relied exclusively on wind or solar, or nuclear. For optimal reliability and limited price volatility, a mix is the best path forward. Democrats liberally proclaim the economic and technical necessity of clean energy, as they should. But they must also make clear that today's energy mix includes natural gas for good reasons.

The Far Left's demand to "keep it in the ground" and ban fossil fuels would hike Americans' costs dramatically and destabilize the energy sector. Calls to achieve 100% renewable power ignore how much land wind and solar require and skirt the fact that neither technology can provide 24/7 power, particularly while battery storage remains expensive with limited storage capacity. And banning fossil fuels would pose serious challenges in the

industrial sector, where fossils generate the high temperatures needed to manufacture steel and cement.

Reality requires tradeoffs, and the United States simply cannot meet its energy demand with renewables alone. The only way to address energy costs, improve reliability, *and* secure broad public support is to embrace an ‘all-of-the-above’ energy strategy. This means supporting renewables, nuclear, geothermal, hydropower, hydrogen, and, yes, natural gas with carbon capture and advanced technologies to reduce upstream emissions. Democrats must be brave enough to make those tradeoffs and be honest with the American people about our energy needs.

## The Political Opportunity

Third Way research shows the public gets this: 63% of Americans want some mix of clean energy and fossil fuels. Surveys from other leading researchers confirm our findings.

Pew Research has found that an overwhelming majority of Americans support using a *mix* of energy sources. Only 29% of Americans believe the US should phase out fossil fuels completely, compared with 69% who say the US should prioritize using a mix of fossil fuels and renewable energy technologies. A survey from AEI shows 71% of Americans believe the United States should use a mix of energy sources, with 29% supporting a complete phaseout of fossil fuels.

These findings hold when you drill down and look at specific technologies, too. Research from Ipsos shows that Americans have roughly equivalent trust in solar, wind, and natural gas. And research from the University of Chicago and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that while 83% of Americans feel it’s important for the next president to expand the US clean energy industry, 69% also support

protecting and expanding fossil fuel development—hardly a clear preference for one technology over another.

Americans do not view energy in binary terms. They want more clean energy, and they understand its benefits. But they also clearly see advantages to natural gas and believe it makes the energy sector more reliable. They want candidates who acknowledge that natural gas is here to stay and have real solutions to its problems. Democrats cannot afford to ignore that. The research is clear; the only people who do not intuitively understand the practical and technological constraints on the energy sector are those on the fringes of our political system.

## The Solution

Democrats should explicitly embrace the need for *every* energy technology, including calling out gas's continued role in our energy sector. Declare yourself *for* all-of-the-above energy to give Americans the choices they want, reduce costs, and make sure no family has to wonder if the power works at home. Make it clear that you believe in the clean energy future—but understand that, with the technologies we have, oil and gas need to stay in the mix, using existing tools to reduce emissions and upstream methane leaks.

For Democrats to show they are serious about all of the above, they should vocally champion these five steps to make American energy affordable, reliable, and secure:

- **Ban the Bans.** Banning entire categories of energy is bad for the economy and stupid politics. Bans are what the Trump administration stands for, and it's jacking up prices, reducing reliability, and screwing over consumers. Democrats should reject bans, whether it's on wind and solar, *or* oil and gas production and pipelines. Focus on boosting competitiveness and affordability for clean technologies instead. Clean technologies are already winning the global deployment race, and the more we build today, the cheaper this technology gets. With more support, we'll add more clean energy faster without raising costs for working people.
- **Build Faster.** The Biden energy agenda took too long to materialize, and most Americans didn't see benefits (i.e., cheaper energy, new jobs, cleaner air and water) before the end of his term. To grow support for clean tech and, indeed, for the Democratic party's ability to govern, Democrats need to get shit done. That starts with vocally embracing permitting reform to build energy projects *and* getting innovative technologies to market faster. This includes fast-tracking energy generation projects, grid-enhancing technologies, and interstate transmission lines and pipelines that will untangle the natural gas chokepoints in the Northeast. We recognize that this will require Democrats to say no to some of the demands of their allies on the left, but clean energy will be the overwhelming beneficiary.

- **Ensure AI Companies Pay Their Fair Share.** American companies are in a decisive race to continue to rapidly improve artificial intelligence technology before our Chinese competitors. If done right, including by scaling AI data centers, our country will reap significant benefits. But we can only do this by delivering abundant all-of-the-above energy to meet surging demand. Democrats should work with states, the leading AI entities, and utilities to ensure companies that put significant new pressure on the electricity system pay their fair share for the additional electricity and infrastructure they need.
- **Prioritize People Over Bureaucrats.** The regional bureaucracies governing our electricity system, known as Independent System Operators (ISOs) and Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs), have failed to keep pace with rapidly rising demand. A combination of miscalculations, poor planning, and bad processes has led to exorbitant price spikes across many parts of the country. Democrats should get behind a bipartisan coalition of Governors fighting for an overhaul of the offending ISOs and RTOs and much more aggressive action by federal regulators to ensure the grids are upgraded, including using rapid and cost-effective options to get more out of our existing grid infrastructure.
- **Unleash Private Capital.** Rhodium Group warned that the “One Big Beautiful Bill” cut the amount of new clean energy likely to come onto the US electricity grid in half, and put \$263 billion in federal and private investment in solar, wind, and storage projects at risk. Democrats should create policy certainty and new investment tools to direct private, as well as additional public capital when available, into every type of energy project, based on how well it can meet the needs of the grid to cut costs and increase reliability.

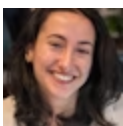


# Conclusion

If Democrats forcefully back an all-of-the-above energy agenda, it will deliver affordable, reliable, and secure energy *and* help prove Democrats are serious about reducing costs. Cleaner fuels and technologies are the most economical choice, and voters clearly want them in the mix. But they also understand the importance of oil and natural gas in our economy and the greater security derived from not putting all your eggs in one basket.

Embracing all-of-the-above energy policy reorients Democrats as the tough pragmatists, not the voice of special interest groups. That pragmatic, affordability-oriented approach is essential to winning back voters in competitive districts and presidential battleground states and, further, to restoring the party's strength and leadership moving forward. America is blessed with a wealth of all kinds of energy. Democrats must be the party that ensures we use all of the above.

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