



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on March 2, 2022

U.S. Energy Dependence on Russia Soaring, Biden Pressed to Stop Paying for Putin's Wars

The talk about the importance of the United States achieving energy independence has been going on for decades. Wouldn't it be great if America produced enough energy to avoid relying on the rest of the world to satisfy her needs in manufacturing, agriculture, and filling up gas tanks? Well, while that seemingly elusive goal was [achieved](#) in 2019, when America produced more petroleum than she consumed, it is no longer the case. Worse yet, the country that America is buying oil from is Russia, which is becoming a political outcast over its senseless war in Ukraine. The pressure is now growing on President Biden to reverse his policies that have brought America to this point of energy dependence.



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How dependent on Russian oil are we? The data is discouraging. According to preliminary 2021 figures [released](#) Monday by the Energy Information Administration, the United States imported 245 million barrels of Russian crude oil and petroleum products last year, a surge of about 24 percent over 2020.

Martin Durbin, senior vice president for policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, raised concerns over this trend, [saying](#), "This equates to nearly 672,000 barrels per day — an all-time record and a 79% increase from just four years ago."

He continued,

With oil prices now pushing \$100 per barrel and Russia dependent on energy sales to fund the government's budget — including its military and the invasion of Ukraine — the leverage Russia's energy exports exert over the West is now on display for the world to see.

To address the situation, Durbin proposes a couple of "no-brainers," starting with the United States lifting its ban on leasing and accelerating permitting on federal land.

He also urged the Energy Department to approve permits for six new and expanded liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals, some of which have languished for months — and in some cases years. That project, Durbin says, would increase natural-gas export capacity by roughly a quarter, which would be especially beneficial with European consumers such as Germany looking to cut their ties with Russia.

In addition to that, the administration should liberalize its permitting policies to build new pipelines, which would boost access to plentiful domestic natural-gas resources.



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And finally, Durbin called on investing \$300 million in the so-called [Three Seas Initiative](#), which would create infrastructure in eastern European countries to import American natural gas.

On Tuesday, Senator Roger Marshall (R-Kan.) introduced legislation to ban the American purchase of Russian oil.

“First and foremost, President Biden needs to restart America’s energy production and quit financing Vladimir Putin’s war on Ukraine by continuing to purchase crude oil from Russia. Under the previous Administration, our nation was energy independent but President Biden reversed course and turned hostile nations like Russia into America’s gas station,” said the senator in a [statement](#).

The bill immediately garnered the support of at least eight other Republican senators, including Senator John Barrasso of Wyoming, the ranking member on the Energy Committee. All of the backers pointed to the abundance of America’s own fuels and called on President Biden to utilize them.

“Why are we importing oil from Russia when the natural resources we need are in our backyard? Russian oil and gas funds Vladimir Putin’s aggression in Europe. North Dakota and American oil can and should fill the gap,” said Senator Kevin Cramer (N.D.).

Restoring America’s energy independence, said Senator Jerry Moran (Kan.), “can’t be accomplished without enabling our oil and gas producers to play a larger role.”

One of the most important things that must be done, the senators believe, is immediately restarting the Keystone XL Pipeline. Built in June 2010, the system carried over 800,000 barrels a day from Alberta, Canada, to refineries in the United States. It was first [stalled](#) by Barack Obama, then [resurrected](#) by President Donald Trump, and finally [killed](#) by President Biden on his first day in office.

As a result, the imports of Russian oil spiked to record highs. As [reported](#) by *The New American* last June:

Within months of President Biden halting the Keystone Pipeline, pausing new oil and gas leases on federal lands, and imposing further restrictions on U.S. oil companies in the name of countering “climate change,” U.S. imports of crude oil and other petroleum products from Russia set a new record, reaching 22.9 million barrels in March, the highest level since August 2010. Crude oil imports alone stood at [6.1 million barrels](#), making Russia the third-largest oil exporter to the United States.

National Review pointed out that the oil situation deteriorated for the United States last year, and that in August, Russia became the second-largest exporter of oil to the United States. “Think that might be a reason Putin feels so confident?” wondered the outlet.

Asked about America’s plan to cut off oil and gas purchases from Russia amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken [signaled](#) it is not going to happen.

“Well, what we’re doing ... is making sure that we inflict maximum pain on Russia for what President Putin has done, while minimizing any of the pain to us,” Blinken said.

On February 23, when Russia [recognized](#) the independence of two Ukrainian breakaway republics and moved its forces into Ukrainian territory, Reuters [reported](#) the Biden administration had no plans of “target[ing] Russia’s crude oil and refined fuel sector with sanctions cutting off trade, due to concerns about inflation and the harm it could do to its European allies, global oil markets and U.S. consumers.”



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In the meantime, the Biden administration continues to peddle its “climate change” agenda. On Monday, U.S. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm [reiterated](#) the administration’s support for spending taxpayer money on “green energy,” supposedly “the best way to reduce domestic and international dependence on Russian oil and gas” and achieve net-zero American emissions by 2050.



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