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January 23, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

As you prepare for your upcoming trip to India and your historic attendance of the Republic Day parade, I write in support of the effort undertaken by the First Lady and you to extend a hand of friendship and hope to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

As you embark on a new chapter in diplomatic relations with the Prime Minister, I want to bring your attention to specific actions India has taken to create jobs and bolster its domestic shipbuilding industry through the import of American liquefied natural gas (LNG), as well as critical opportunities to bring these same game-changing benefits to our own citizens.

As you may know, Prime Minister Modi has launched an aggressive “Make in India” effort. The policy blueprint is akin to Democrats’ “Make It In America” agenda, and has taken some considerable steps which I find to be exemplary. Most notably, the Prime Minister recognizes the rise of LNG trade as an opportunity to revitalize its shipbuilding base, create jobs, and advance its technological edge, all of which are vital to every country’s national security. As India prepares to import American LNG, it has put out a tender for nine LNG vessels, under the condition that the winning bidder builds one of every three ships in India.

American LNG is a strategic national asset, and must be used to bolster another strategic national asset, our domestic shipbuilding industry and merchant marine personnel. As clearly laid out in section 3503 of Public Law 113-66, maintaining a U.S. shipbuilding base is critical to meeting United States national security requirements, and can be achieved through the construction of vessels for use in transporting potential new energy exports. India recognizes the national security significance of such technology and capability, as demonstrated by its commitment to require one-third of its LNG import vessels to be Indian-built. South Korea also recognizes what’s at stake, and has registered shipbuilding technology as a national core technology to be controlled by the Korean government.

It is time for the United States to recognize this global trend and use its LNG as leverage to bring to our shores new industries, hundreds of thousands of jobs, and national security modernizations befitting a

global climate in which trade by sea will be a critical vulnerability for those nations who do not build, own, or operate ships.

In December of 2014, you signed into law the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Reauthorization Act, which contained a provision that requires the Secretary of Transportation to develop a program to promote the use of U.S.-flag vessels in the export of LNG, and to give priority processing of export applications for deepwater terminals that would utilize U.S.-flag vessels. This week, as well, Congress will consider a bill to expedite the approval process for LNG export, and you can be sure that the role of U.S.-built and -flagged vessels will be discussed on the floor of the House of Representatives.

The opportunity is ripe to push a program that reinvigorates our domestic maritime industry, advances American manufacturing, creates good shipbuilding and maritime jobs, and reclaims our expertise in a technology we once pioneered. The potential is vast, and I urge you to stand strong for American shipbuilding as Prime Minister Modi has for India's.

Sincerely,



John Garamendi
Third District, California

Cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Mark Warner, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Ami Bera, Member of U.S. Congress
The Honorable Anthony Foxx, U.S. Secretary of Transportation
The Honorable Penny Pritzker, U.S. Secretary of Commerce
The Honorable Ernest Moniz, U.S. Secretary of Energy