



RANDY WEBER
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
FOURTEENTH DISTRICT, TEXAS

March 11, 2024

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20501

The Honorable Pramila Jayapal
2346 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Whitehouse and Representative Jayapal:

I was notified, not by your offices, but by stakeholders, local media, and constituents about your visit to my district in Southeast Texas, the energy capital of the world. Although your visit was very brief, I hope you had the opportunity to see the vibrant communities and industries that make up Port Arthur and Southeast Texas. That said, I am sure it did not fit your gloom-and-doom narrative.

As you know, the Texas chemical industry manufactures countless products that improve the quality of life for billions of people around the world. Chemical manufacturers in my district transform natural gas and other mineral resources into the building blocks for essential products that sustain and improve our daily lives, including the modern transportation that brought you to my district, assuming that you did not walk down to Texas. The chemical industry is essential to the functioning of our society and economy, and its innovations are key to a brighter future.

Chemistry is the science behind sustainability. The chemical industry makes renewable energy a reality by creating photovoltaic cells to generate solar power, lightweight blades to generate wind power, and battery technologies to store the electricity that power our electric cars, computers, and cell phones. The business of chemistry is essential to promoting environmental sustainability.

During your visit, I trust you gained insight into the significant contributions that the industry brings to my district and that it shares with the rest of the U.S. and the world. Health, safety, and environmental responsibility are paramount to us, and I am proud to share with you some of the benefits our industry brings to my constituents:

- **Commitment to Clean Air and Water:** Industry has invested tens of billions of dollars in reducing emissions and improving environmental performance. They have been dedicated to reducing waste and maintaining clean air and water.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Industry's commitment to environmental improvement is evident through numerous projects aimed at reducing emissions and improving air quality. Since 1998, over 100 environmental improvement projects have been completed in Southeast Texas, resulting in substantial reductions in emissions and a continuous regional air quality monitoring network.
- **Safety:** Safety remains our top priority, with best-in-class safety performance exceeding state and national averages. Our facilities adhere to strict safety protocols, and initiatives like the Industrial Safety Training Council provide essential safety training to thousands of individuals each year.
- **Economic Impact:** Southeast Texas serves as a major hub for storage and export of crude oil, refined fuels, liquefied natural gas (LNG), and renewable fuels. The chemical and petrochemical facilities contribute significantly to the national supply of transportation fuels while fostering economic growth in our region.
- **Employment Opportunities:** The industry provides substantial employment opportunities, with every job directly created leading to four indirect jobs. In 2019 alone, over 23,000 individuals were employed by industry in the four-county region, with average annual wages exceeding \$86,600.
- **Product Innovation:** Products derived from oil, gas, and other petrochemicals play a vital role in enriching human lives—including those of your constituents in Rhode Island and Washington. From health care products and medical supplies to food supply, technology components, and transportation fuels, our industry is at the forefront of innovation.
- **Corporate Citizenship:** Industry members have invested over \$35 million in donations and contributions to support local organizations, focusing on education, environmental stewardship, workforce development, and health and safety initiatives. These investments have significantly impacted our communities, enriching the lives of residents and fostering a culture of giving back.

Surely what you saw in Southeast Texas dispelled the myths that you have bought into and promulgated during your “Toxic Tour.” Surely, you now understand that modern life is not possible without the chemical industry. Surely, you will now work to promote commonsense policies that allow the chemical industry to continue to innovate, producing products even more cleanly and efficiently.

Attacking our domestic industry only serves to harm the U.S. It makes our country more reliant on foreign producers that do not take their labor force, much less the environment, into consideration. Look around your home, your office, your committee rooms; you will be hard pressed to find products that are not facilitated by the chemical industry.

In your joint press release, you applaud President Biden for the LNG export halt. You must have been surprised to find that the community of Port Arthur strongly supports the LNG industry. I am enclosing letters from community leaders that reflect this viewpoint. While your constituents in Washington and Rhode Island may subscribe to your distorted views, Texans do not have the time for such fallacies—they are hard at work making America better.

To shield you from being labelled hypocrites, consider this: A roundtrip flight from Seattle, Washington to Washington, D.C. produces around 1,155 pounds of CO2 per passenger, equal to the average person's emissions for an entire month of living. If you are truly dedicated to reducing emissions, I would be happy to recommend a walking route. Fortunately, the roundtrip flight from Providence, Rhode Island produces considerably less greenhouse gases. And the walk is a lot shorter.

Sincerely,



RANDY K. WEBER
United States Representative

Enclosures