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DR. LOREN C. SCOTT
President

9/25/23

Via email (fergas@hq.doe.gov)

U.S. Department of Energy (FE-34)
Office of Regulation, Analysis, and Engagement
Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management
Forrestal Building
Room 3E-056
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585
Attn: Mrs. Amy Sweeney

**Re: Docket No. 23-87-LNG
Lake Charles Exports, LLC Application**

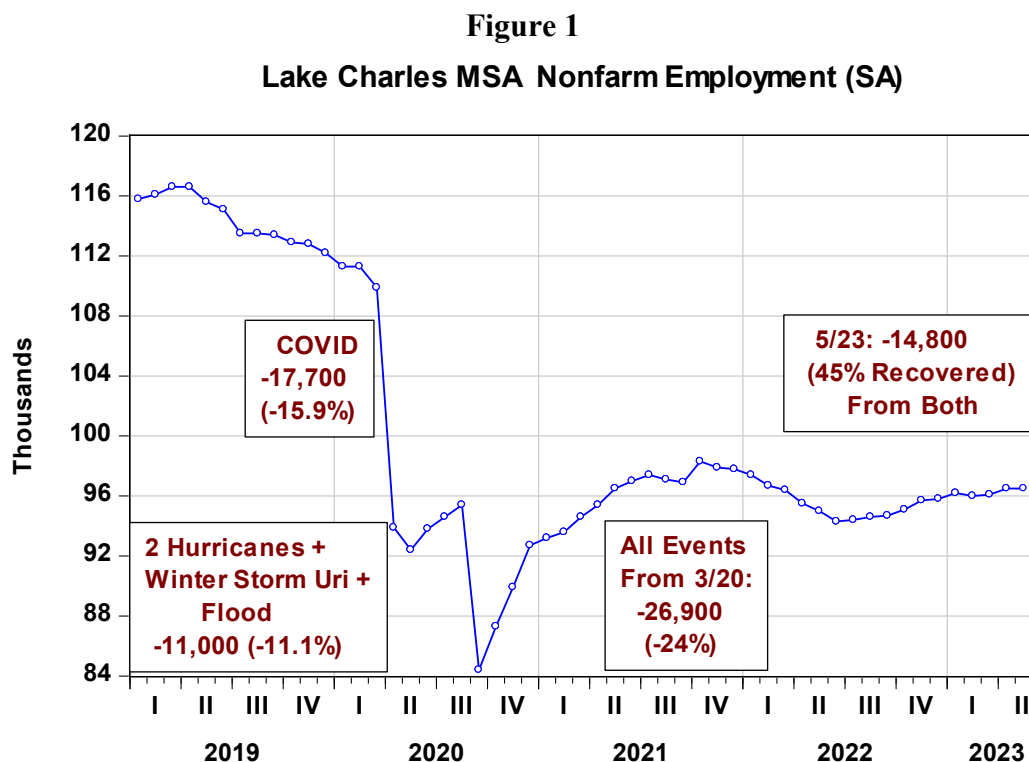
Dear Mrs. Sweeney:

I am writing to express my unequivocal support for Lake Charles Exports, LLC's new application for long-term authorization to export LNG to non-Free Trade Agreement countries from the existing Lake Charles Terminal. Further, I am requesting an expedited consideration.

I am a Professor Emeritus of Economics at LSU and the president of the firm in this letterhead. Over the past 40 years, I have been the author or co-author of the annual forecast of the Louisiana economy---now called the *Louisiana Economic Forecast* (LEF). This role has required me to develop an extensive knowledge of the Lake Charles MSA economy.

At the present time, this economy is in a condition of serious distress as shown in Figure 1 below. This figure tracks the MSA's seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment from January 1 below. This figure tracks the MSA's seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment from January 1 2019 (pre-COVID) through May 2023. This figure appears in the latest issue (to be released

October 3rd) of the LEF and is designed to help the reader see how well the area has recovered from the job losses due to the COVID shutdown.



Of Louisiana’s nine MSAs, the Lake Charles MSA has the poorest record of recovery from the COVID shutdown, having recovered only 45% of the jobs lost as of May 2023. Note that this MSA’s troubles are not solely due to the shutdown. Immediately after the shutdown, this MSA suffered through **four natural disasters**---two major hurricanes, Winter Storm Uri, and a significant flood. The impact of these natural disasters was intensified by the financial failure of many homeowner insurance companies and an unusually long period before federal aid arrived.

This is why the headline on the Lake Charles MSA section of the LEF says “**Desperately Needed: New FIDs from LNGs**”. Later in the text it is pointed out that that new FIDs on LNG projects were the only way out of this hole. Importantly, this text was written in late August, about 6 weeks before I was asked to pen this letter.

Given these circumstances, it would be hard to over-state the importance of your approval of the Lake Charles Exports application as soon as possible in order to allow this long overdue project to proceed. It is absolutely critical to the recovery of this important MSA.

