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**COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES**

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May 18, 2023

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland,

On April 19, 2023, the House Natural Resources Committee held a hearing to examine the President's Fiscal Year 2024 budget request for the Department of the Interior, in which you participated as the witness and offered your testimony on the Administration's priorities as it relates to the Department of the Interior. During our brief interaction, I asked you if the current Administration considers energy poverty to be a good thing. You responded that you were unfamiliar with the term.<sup>1</sup> I am reaching out today to make sure you are familiar with the concept of energy poverty, and to request that you respond with a statement on your current efforts to alleviate energy poverty by strengthening the reliability of our energy supply and electrical grid.

Upon taking office in 2021, President Biden began issuing an onslaught of harmful executive orders that seek to push the country into an energy "transition" that we are not prepared for, that is not feasible at the scale on which this administration seeks to act, and for which the necessary resources are unavailable. The Department of Interior under your leadership has been on the front line of blocking or delaying American energy production and security. The results speak for themselves in the form of record high gas prices, families struggling to pay their home energy bills, citizens having to make tough choices when paying living expenses, skyrocketing inflation, and more, all of which contribute to energy poverty as we discussed during our April 19<sup>th</sup> exchange. To make matters worse, we are not replacing our affordable and abundant fossil fuel resources with something cleaner or more accessible, we are instead offshoring our energy production to developing countries who suffer the humanitarian and environmental abuse that is so prevalent under this so called "green" transition.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Examining the President's FY 2024 Budget Request for the Department of the Interior, House Natural Resources Committee, April 19, 2023, <https://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=413024>.

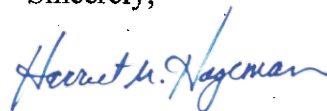
<sup>2</sup> Cobalt Red: How 'modern-day slavery' in the Congo powers the rechargeable battery economy, Terry Gross, NPR, February 1, 2023, <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2023/02/01/1152893248/red-cobalt-congo-drc-mining-siddharth-kara>.

Considering the importance of this issue, as well as your responses to my questions, it is important that we have a full understanding of this administration's policies and policy goals by obtaining answers to the following questions:

1. A statement on how the Department defines "energy poverty"
2. What the Department of Interior is doing to prevent energy poverty, including specific references to executive and secretarial orders achieving these goals

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Harriet M. Hageman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping line extending from the end.

Harriet M. Hageman  
Member of Congress