

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 18, 2022

The Honorable Naz Durakoglu
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Legislative Affairs
2201 C St NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ms. Durakoglu,

Thank you for your letter dated February 9. While we appreciate you taking time to respond to our letter from January 21 regarding the East Mediterranean Gas Pipeline (EMGP), we must object to several of the assertions that you make in your response.

First of all, it is simply not true that “the United States did not reverse its position as it had not formally or financially supported the EMGP thus far.” Despite its lack of financial support, the United States had consistently expressed diplomatic support for the project. We call your attention to the October 7, 2019 Joint Statement Regarding the Second United States-Greece Strategic Dialogue which stated:

The Greek and U.S. governments acknowledged the potential of the proposed EastMed gas pipeline to contribute to the energy security and diversification of energy sources and routes in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The September 28, 2020 Joint Statement Regarding the High-Level Review of the US-Greece Strategic Dialogue restated the support of EMGP by declaring:

*The United States and Greece welcomed the completion of the Greek section of the Trans Adriatic Pipeline and looked forward to discussing at the coming Strategic Dialogue their mutual support for the Interconnector Greece-Bulgaria, the floating storage regasification unit project at Alexandroupoli, the privatization of the Kavala underground gas storage, the Interconnection Greece – North Macedonia project, and other commercially viable projects, **which could include the EastMedGas Pipeline.** (emphasis added)*

We also remind you of Section 203 of the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act (the “EastMed Act”), which provides that:

*It is the policy of the United States....to **strongly support** the completion of the Trans Adriatic and **Eastern Mediterranean Pipelines** and the establishment of liquified*

natural gas (LNG) terminals across the Eastern Mediterranean as a means of diversifying regional energy needs away from the Russian Federation... (emphasis added)

Officials who oversaw energy diplomacy during the Trump Administration, including Frank Fannon, the inaugural Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Resources, and Secretary of Energy Dan Brouillette, expressed US support for the EMGP on multiple occasions.

Lastly, in the State Department's non-paper on the EMGP, your colleagues responsible for drafting it make the reversal in policy explicit:

*While we understand some of the parties involved may have reasons to indicate continued support for the project, we believe that concerns we have identified **justify ending support now** to better serve our shared interests. (emphasis added)*

Whether you want to classify the Administration's position as a clarification or a reversal, it is clearly a position at odds with positions taken during the Trump Administration, at odds with positions taken by members of Congress, and at odds with American law.

Secondly, we have an issue with the logic behind this reversal of policy. While previous expressions of US support for the EMGP were indeed conditioned on commercial viability and the State Department's reversal in policy assumes lack of such viability, this is a conclusion that seems to have been reached unilaterally, absent consultations with our allies and partners in the region and before the completion of feasibility studies. The EastMed Act requires multiple reports to be submitted to Congress regarding energy development and infrastructure, and to our knowledge no report has been submitted comprehensively analyzing the commercial viability issue. The State Department appears to have rushed to a conclusion here and in the process skipped several key steps including consulting with US allies and partners and with the United States Congress as required by the EastMed Act.

Finally, while your February 9 response states "The decision to move forward with EMGP ultimately rests with the nations involved in the project," the non-paper on the EMGP issued by the State Department specifically lobbies our allies and partners to follow your reversal of policy:

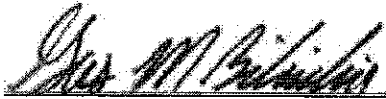
*Given this concern, fundamental questions about the economic viability of the project itself and the global imperative of energy transition, **we are requesting that you and other parties withdraw support for the EMGP project.** (emphasis added)*

Our January 21 letter sought to address twin crises: the unprecedented energy crunch in Europe and the vulnerability of US allies and partners to Russian control over natural gas supplies. Eastern Mediterranean energy supplies – hydrocarbons and renewables – can alleviate both crises. Instead of aggressively signaling that the US will pursue every policy

option to bring these resources online as soon as possible, the State Department has unilaterally taken options off the table. The manner in which the issue of the EMGP was handled only helps the malign influences, including Russia, Turkey and Iran, that we identified in the EastMed Act.

In lieu of a response in writing, we are requesting an in-person briefing for ourselves, the other co-authors of the House's version of the EastMed Act, Representatives Ted Deutch and David Cicilline, and other members interested in this decision by Mr. Amos Hochstein and anyone else responsible for the drafting of the non-paper on the EMGP and in determining Administration policy regarding bringing Eastern Mediterranean energy resources to market quickly.

Sincerely,



Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress



Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress