

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 29, 2023

The Honorable John Kerry
U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Secretary Kerry:

I write with acute concern about the future of clean energy in Guyana. I encourage you to use your role as Special Presidential Envoy to bolster U.S. engagement with Guyanese leadership to ensure that as Guyana dramatically expands oil production in the coming years, the country is able to follow through on its Low Carbon Development Strategy and other environmental stewardship efforts. I ask your office to monitor Guyana's progress in meeting its commitments and report back on additional U.S. actions or assistance that would help Guyana reach this goal.

I am encouraged by Guyana's desire to control and manage its natural resources in consideration of long-term sustainability challenges. These efforts will play a critical role in shaping the country's response to climate change. I am also encouraged that, during Secretary of State Anthony Blinken's visit to the country, the Government of Guyana emphasized its desire to strengthen its partnership with the United States on environmental priorities and reaffirmed its commitment to decarbonization objectives. We should do all we can to help Guyana be successful in that effort.

Guyana is expected to be one of the highest-oil-producing countries in the world by 2025, with anticipated extraction of 1.2 million barrels of oil per day by 2027.¹ As international extraction companies begin drilling, it is imperative that the Government of Guyana ensure extraction companies are held accountable for preparing for and mitigating any potential environmental damage and hazards, especially given the immense risk deep-sea oil drilling poses for Caribbean nations. I encourage you to support U.S. government technical assistance to Guyana's Environmental Protection Agency in achieving these ends.

Guyana has established a Low Carbon Development Strategy and Natural Resources Fund, which aim to leverage the proceeds from oil revenues to finance social programs, promote clean energy initiatives, and protect biodiversity in the country.² It is essential that Guyana vigorously pursue these efforts to uplift the country's citizens, preserve delicate ecosystems, and stimulate low-carbon development in keeping with the goals of the Paris Agreement. I ask for your assistance in ensuring appropriate U.S. government input and support for these efforts.

¹ *Oil Boom Transforms Guyana, Prompting a Scramble for Spoils*, Associated Press (May 2023) (online at apnews.com/article/guyana-oil-discovery-money-14c23a72c6d7c13675493ede42ed1000).

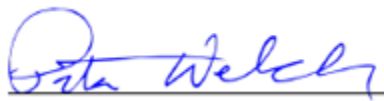
² *Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030*, Office of the President (July 2022) (online at lcds.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Guyanas-Low-Carbon-Development-Strategy-2030.pdf).

As an Amazon Basin country, Guyana also possesses significant sources of natural climate resilience. Guyana's forests cover approximately 85 percent of the country and its deforestation rates are some of the lowest in the world.³ I ask you to monitor U.S. engagement with Guyana to help sustainably manage and conserve this important carbon sink and partner with Guyana on innovative ways to create opportunities for sustainable economic development that align with low-carbon development and integrate neighboring Amazon countries.

Finally, I ask that you play a leading role in U.S. engagement with the many advocates in Guyana's civil society who are working to ensure a more equitable, sustainable, and secure future. This should include developing a clean energy economy and preserving forests in Guyana.

I ask to be kept apprised of Guyana's progress in reaching these goals, and additional U.S. actions needed to support the country's efforts. Thank you for your attention to this matter and your outstanding service in this role.

Sincerely,



Peter Welch
United States Senator

³ Convention on Biological Diversity, Guyana—Details (online at [www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=gy#:~:text=Biodiversity%20Facts&text=Guyana's%20total%20size%20is%202015%2C000,forest%20\(18.5%20million%20hectares\)](http://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=gy#:~:text=Biodiversity%20Facts&text=Guyana's%20total%20size%20is%202015%2C000,forest%20(18.5%20million%20hectares))) (accessed July 2023).