

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 1, 2026

Susie Wiles
White House Chief of Staff
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Ms. Wiles:

On April 16, 2026, President Trump described skyrocketing energy prices as “fake inflation.”¹ Unfortunately for the American public, rising energy costs are all too real: in March, consumers saw the highest monthly increase in energy prices in more than twenty years, driven in large part by President Trump’s reckless, illegal war in Iran.² As of today, a gallon of gasoline costs on average \$4.39 – more than \$1.25 per gallon higher than when President Trump took office.³

Economists are warning that the surge in energy prices will reverberate throughout the global economy, and the United States is not immune to the resulting inflationary effects. Already Americans are seeing the cost of consumer goods increase for everything from airline tickets to clothing and groceries. In light of this, we write to seek clarification on whether you and other Administration officials agree that rising energy prices are “fake” and to request additional information on the steps you and the President will take to lower prices for Americans.

President Trump’s war with Iran has effectively halted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, removing roughly one-fifth of the world’s oil and gas supply from the market.⁴ Since President Trump first announced a ceasefire on April 7, 2026, 150 ships total have passed through the Strait⁵ – about eight per day, compared to around 130 ships per day prior to the war.⁶ As a direct result, gasoline, diesel and jet fuel prices have skyrocketed. Brent crude oil, which sets the price for most of the world’s traded oil, reached its highest level since 2022 – and is up more than

¹ New York Times, “In Las Vegas, Trump Brushes Off Rising Fuel Prices,” Chris Cameron, April 16, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/16/us/politics/trump-taxes-fuel-las-vegas.html>.

² Forbes, “Iran War’s Inflation Impact: Energy Prices Surged In Largest Gain Since 2005,” Ty Roush, April 10, 2026, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tylerroush/2026/04/10/iran-wars-inflation-impact-consumer-prices-skyrocketed-last-month-as-fuel-costs-surged/>.

³ AAA, National Average Gas Prices, <https://gasprices.aaa.com/>, retrieved April 29, 2026; U.S. Energy Information Administration, US Regular All Formulations Gas Price [GASREGW], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/GASREGW>.

⁴ Reuters, “How the Strait of Hormuz closure affects global oil supply,” Clare Farley, Minami Funakoshi, Pasit Kongkunakornkul, Kripa Jayaram, Sumanta Sen, and Simon Webb, March 11, 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/IRAN-CRISIS/OIL-LNG/mopaokxlypa/>.

⁵ New York Times, “Both Iran and U.S. Blockade Strait of Hormuz,” Pranav Baskar, April 24, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/24/world/middleeast/iran-us-strait-of-hormuz-blockade.html>.

⁶ New York Times, “Iran Again Tightens Its Grip on Shipping in the Strait of Hormuz,” Peter Eavis, April 22, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/22/business/strait-of-hormuz-traffic-iran.html>.

60% since before the conflict began.⁷ And the national average U.S. gasoline price is now \$4.39 per gallon – the highest in four years and more than \$1 higher per gallon than prior to the war.⁸ Since the war began, American families have cumulatively spent \$16 billion more on gas alone than they would have if President Trump had not attacked Iran.⁹

These energy price shocks do not stop at the gas station – they reverberate across the entire economy. Global jet fuel prices are up more than 70 percent since the war began, with “carriers everywhere...increasingly passing costs on to passengers wherever they can by raising airfares, charging more for bags and tacking on additional charges for fuel.”¹⁰ Diesel prices – which more closely reflect global supply and demand conditions than gasoline – have risen approximately 45 percent since the start of the war.¹¹ Diesel powers the trucks, trains, ships, and farm equipment that move goods across the nation’s supply chain; when diesel prices climb, so does the price of nearly every good sold in America.¹² Shipping companies, including the U.S. Postal Service and Amazon, have already added fuel surcharges for shipments, and consumer prices are expected to continue rising.¹³ And the cost to produce, package, and transport food is also increasing as a result of higher energy prices, which will, in turn, contribute to higher grocery costs.¹⁴

The impacts of the war have already begun to show up in U.S. inflation data. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI), inflation tripled between February and March, and annual inflation reached its highest level since May 2024.¹⁵ The surge in inflation was largely driven by energy prices, which increased 10.9 percent in March – the highest monthly increase in more than twenty years.¹⁶

⁷ Bloomberg, “Brent Oil Closes Above \$100 for First Time Since August 2022,” Mia Gindis and Charles Gorrivan, March 12, 2026, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2026-03-12/brent-oil-closes-above-100-for-first-time-since-august-2022>; Trading Economics, Brent crude oil, <https://tradingeconomics.com/commodity/brent-crude-oil>.

⁸ AAA, National Average Gas Prices, <https://gasprices.aaa.com/>, retrieved April 29, 2026.

⁹ Joint Economic Committee, “Updated State-by-State Data — Families Have Already Paid \$16 Billion More for Gasoline Since the Iran War Began,” April 2026, p. 1, https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/e15e073f-8e06-40ee-8aba-47a0f77ab7ea/updated-jec-fact-sheet-on-state-by-state-gas-cost-increases.pdf.

¹⁰ New York Times, “Jet Fuel Shortages Could Make Travel a ‘Total Mess’ This Summer,” Christine Chung, April 24, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/24/travel/flight-cancellations-europe-summer-vacation.html>.

¹¹ New York Times, “Why Diesel Has Become a Much Bigger Economic Problem Than Gasoline,” Emmett Lindner, April 23, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/23/business/energy-environment/iran-war-diesel-prices-gasoline.html>.

¹² NBC News, “‘A direct hit for consumer prices’: Diesel surges past \$5 a gallon,” Hannah Parker and Allie Canal, March 17, 2026, <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/diesel-prices-iran-war-farmers-trump-rena263902>.

¹³ CNBC, “U.S.-Iran war ‘tax’ begins to hit American businesses and consumers,” Kevin Williams, April 4, 2026, <https://www.cnbc.com/2026/04/04/us-iran-war-gas-prices-diesel-jet-fuel-economy-consumer-tax.html>.

¹⁴ CNBC, “Grocery shock on the horizon for approaching U.S. elections as Iran war drags on,” Garrett Downs, April 2, 2026, <https://www.cnbc.com/2026/04/02/grocery-shock-on-the-horizon-for-us-elections-as-iran-war-dragson.html>.

¹⁵ CNN, “US inflation tripled last month on record spike in gas prices,” April 10, 2026, <https://www.cnn.com/2026/04/10/business/live-news/us-cpi-march-inflation-iran>; Business Insider, “Inflation rose in March to the highest rate in 2 years as the Iran war lifted energy prices,” Madison Hoff, April 10, 2026, <https://www.businessinsider.com/cpi-march-inflation-rose-missed-forecasts-iran-war-2026-4>.

¹⁶ Forbes, “Iran War’s Inflation Impact: Energy Prices Surged In Largest Gain Since 2005,” Ty Roush, April 10, 2026, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tyleroush/2026/04/10/iran-wars-inflation-impact-consumer-prices-skyrocketed-last-month-as-fuel-costs-surged/>.

But despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, President Trump has called rising energy costs “fake inflation.”¹⁷ Specifically, on April 16, President Trump said “we’re having some fake inflation because of the fuel, the energy prices,” and asked that consumers “see what happens over the next week or so,” promising they would be “very impressed.”¹⁸ More than a week has passed since Trump made these comments, and there is no evidence that prices are stabilizing and nothing to impress American families. Indeed, global energy prices have actually *increased* since then. Brent crude was around \$90 per barrel when President Trump made his comments – this week, it reached \$119 per barrel.¹⁹ Dismissing the economic pain of millions of Americans as “fake” while offering nothing but vague reassurances is not a policy – it is an abdication of responsibility.

To understand what, if anything, this Administration is doing to address the surging energy prices its reckless and illegal war with Iran has helped create, we request answers to the following questions no later than May 15, 2026:

1. Is President Trump’s war with Iran increasing energy prices? If not, why not?
2. Is President Trump’s war with Iran increasing consumer prices? If not, why not?
3. On April 16, President Trump said “we’re having some fake inflation because of the fuel, the energy prices.” Do you agree with President Trump that the highest monthly increase in energy prices in more than twenty years is “fake inflation”? Please explain.
4. On April 16, President Trump promised Americans would be “very impressed” by energy prices “over the next week or so.” Instead, energy prices have risen further since these comments. Do you consider this promise to have been fulfilled? If not, when should Americans expect to see inflation and energy prices fall? Please explain.
5. You reportedly told the President’s “advisers to bring ideas to the Oval Office to lower gasoline prices.”²⁰ What specific proposals have been presented to you, and how have you advised the President on how to lower energy prices? Please explain.
6. Rising energy prices drive up costs across the U.S. economy. Please explain the impact on each of the following areas and outline your plan to reduce those costs:
 - a. Transporting goods – How do fuel price increases affect the costs of goods that are transported through the U.S., and how will you bring those costs down?
 - b. Packaging goods – How do energy price increases affect the costs of manufacturing goods and materials for packaging, and how will you bring those costs down?

¹⁷ The Hill, “Trump defends economic policies, casts aside ‘fake inflation’ amid Iran war,” Sarah Davis, April 16, 2025, <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/5835743-trump-defends-economic-policies/>.

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ Trading Economics, Brent crude oil, <https://tradingeconomics.com/commodity/brent-crude-oil>.

²⁰ Politico, “Susie Wiles sounds the alarm on gas prices,” Ben Lefebvre, March 5, 2026, <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/03/05/iran-energy-prices-trump-wiles-00813710?lctg=6796bccb7b375dec1909a709>.

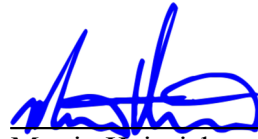
- c. Groceries – How do energy price increases affect the full grocery supply chain – from production to shelf – and how will you bring those costs down?

All Americans deserve to know what the intentions of its leaders are when it comes to activities that directly impact the economy. We request answers to these questions on their behalf and expect your prompt and attentive reply.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
Ranking Member
Committee on Banking,
Housing, and Urban Affairs



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Energy and Natural
Resources