Dear Indiana Utility Regulatory Commissioners,

On behalf of Securing America’s Future Energy (SAFE), we are writing to voice our support for the city of Indianapolis in its efforts to reduce its dependence on oil. From our decades of military and government experience, we know all too well how our nation’s oil dependence remains a tangible threat to U.S. national security and the health and stability of the American economy.

America is the world’s largest oil consumer, accounting for one-fifth of daily global demand, and oil meets a larger share of U.S. energy needs than any other fuel. Yet no sector of our economy embodies our dependence more completely than transportation. Petroleum fuels currently account for 92 percent of the energy that powers our cars, trucks, ships, and aircraft. This utter dependence ties the fate of the U.S. economy to the highly unpredictable global oil market. Recent studies find that the annual financial cost to the U.S. military to secure the world’s oil supply lines and infrastructure amounts to $83 billion. Meanwhile, as fuel costs have risen in recent years, the burden on the average American household has more than doubled from $1,200 spent on gasoline in 2002 to in excess of $2,700 in 2012.

Vehicles powered by electricity and natural gas represent the country’s best opportunity for tackling oil dependence. Electric vehicles (EVs), in particular, rely on a variety of domestic energy supplies that offer U.S. consumers stable fuel prices and—in states like Indiana—would reduce the cost of driving by up to 75 percent. By decreasing our nation’s oil consumption, electric vehicles reduce the leverage that overseas actors have over our foreign policy and insulate our economy from high and volatile oil prices.

The necessary shift of our transportation sector toward new fuels and infrastructure will take time, but the transition can be dramatically accelerated by innovative, scalable programs designed to increase consumers’ exposure to new technologies like electric vehicles. Indianapolis’ BlueIndy not only has the potential to become the country’s largest EV car-sharing program, providing enhanced and affordable mobility to the city’s residents, it also has the potential to become a national model for other cities in deploying electric transportation. We applaud Indianapolis and the Commission for undertaking such efforts to reduce Indianapolis’ dependence on oil. Such investments in improving local and national energy security will undoubtedly yield a return on investment for generations to come.

Sincerest regards,

Admiral Dennis Blair, USN (Ret.)  
Former Director of National Intelligence and  
Former Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Command  
Co-Chair, Commission on Energy and Geopolitics and  
Member, Energy Security Leadership Council

General James Conway (Ret.)  
34th Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps  
Co-Chair, Energy Security Leadership Council