



June 2, 2008

Dear Senator:

On behalf of Environment America and Sierra Club, our affiliates in 50 states, and nearly 2 million combined members, we are writing to strongly urge you to support strengthening amendments to the Climate Security Act (S. 3036) and oppose amendments to weaken it in order to ultimately pass a strong, science-based bill that meets the challenge of global warming. We seek strengthening changes that would ensure that the bill achieves its promised reductions in global warming emissions, as well as additional reductions as demanded by the science over time, and invests resources in ways that accelerate the nation's transition to clean energy quickly, efficiently, and at the lowest cost to society.

Global warming is the defining environmental problem of our time. From rising sea levels along the East Coast, to more intense hurricanes along the Gulf Coast, to increased drought and water shortages in the Southeast and West, global warming will leave no corner of America unaffected unless the United States takes serious action soon. The impact of global warming on other nations of the world also must not be underestimated.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change made clear in its seminal report last year that that we must reduce our emissions of global warming pollutants quickly and dramatically in order to avoid the most catastrophic, long-term effects of global warming. Specifically, the most important task of any U.S. effort to address global warming must be to produce significant domestic emission reductions as soon as possible.

Fortunately, economic analysis by McKinsey & Co. and others shows that there is great potential to reduce U.S. emissions in the near-term, and, if done appropriately, these reductions can be achieved at relatively low cost or even – in many cases – net economic gain. Significantly reducing U.S. emissions now will help put America in the best position to achieve deeper cuts that will be required in future years without undue economic harm.

Debating global warming in the Senate is a historic achievement, and the Boxer-Lieberman-Warner substitute amendment is a major step in the right direction. We commend the sponsors for putting this issue directly before the Senate and the American public. However, the legislation must be strengthened to effectively reduce U.S. emissions in the short-term, achieve emission reductions consistent with the latest science over the long-term, and use public resources for public benefit by investing in a clean and secure energy economy and reducing the overall cost of the program to society.

To that end, we strongly urge you to support amendments to ensure prompt and meaningful action in response to new scientific information as it becomes available; better prioritize investing public resources in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other infrastructure improvements, such as public transportation, which will decrease our use of fossil fuels and emissions of global warming pollution; and federalize actions taken by more than half of the states to increase the use of wind, solar, and other clean, homegrown, and renewable electricity sources. In addition, we urge you to support amendments to

tighten the framework of the bill and provide more accountability for how public resources are spent in the fight against global warming.

We also urge you to reject efforts that would undercut our nation's progress on global warming by voting against amendments that would block states from addressing global warming, create loopholes and safety valves that further undermine the pollution caps, and provide additional subsidies for fossil fuels or nuclear power.

Only bold, science-based action can stave off catastrophic effects of global warming. We strongly urge you to strengthen the Climate Security Act and to oppose efforts to weaken it in order to subsequently pass global warming legislation equal to the task of addressing this global crisis.

Sincerely,

Margie Alt  
Executive Director  
Environment America

Carl Pope  
Executive Director  
Sierra Club