

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 15, 2006

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. President:

As you know, diplomats representing 189 countries, including the United States, are now in Nairobi, Kenya discussing the most pressing environmental issue currently facing mankind: human-induced global warming. Unfortunately, we have not been satisfied with the level of U.S. participation in the international negotiations or in reducing our own domestic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Therefore, as incoming Chairs of three important Senate Committees on global warming, we seek your commitment to work with the new Congress to pass meaningful climate change legislation in 2007. The U.S. must move quickly to adopt economy-wide constraints on domestic GHG emissions and then work with the international community to forge an effective and equitable global agreement.

Scientists are now warning that we may be reaching a "tipping point" beyond which it will be extremely difficult, or perhaps impossible, to avoid the worst consequences of climate change. If the world continues on its current path of emissions increases, we could risk global climatic disasters on an unprecedented scale, ranging from dangerous sea level rise, to increasingly damaging hurricanes (such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita), increased deaths from air pollution and disease, to widespread geo-political instability. A recent report by Sir Nicholas Stern finds that leaving climate change unchecked could cost between 5%-20% of global GDP.

As United States Senators, we have all authored or co-sponsored legislation to combat global warming. Although our approaches differ slightly, we—along with the overwhelming majority of the scientific community, agree that human caused global warming is real and that we must pass legislation to address this threat. We are committed to achieving this result.

As you know, in addition to our proposed bills, on June 22, 2005, the United States Senate went on record for the first time in bipartisan support of mandatory limits on greenhouse gases by a vote 53-44. We have good reason to believe that the number of Senators in support of such legislation is now even larger than that vote demonstrated.

The recent elections have signaled a need to change direction in many areas, including global warming. If we are to leave our children a world that resembles the earth we inherited, we must

act now to address GHG emissions. When the 110th Congress begins in January, we pledge to work to pass an effective system of mandatory limits on greenhouse gases.

We urge you to work with us to reach this result and to signal to the world that global warming legislation is on the way.

Respectfully,

Barbara Defer [Signature]
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