

May 29, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madame Speaker,

The American Clean Energy and Security Act offers our country the most important opportunity in generations to jumpstart our economy, create millions of new, well-paying jobs and set the stage for America to compete and win in a 21st century economy while reducing global warming pollution. A commitment by our elected leaders to a strong clean energy jobs bill will benefit small businesses and set us on the pathway back to economic prosperity. But in order to reach the full potential of this opportunity, Congress will need to stand strong against the special interests that seek to weaken the bill at every turn.

The Bush Administration had a virtual open-door policy to Big Oil for the last eight years. Meanwhile, the powerful interests of oil and coal have had a stranglehold on our energy policy, keeping our country hooked on old, dirty and expensive energy sources. At the same time, China and India have invested massively in clean energy technology development, recognizing that global economic leadership in the future is dependent on investments in clean energy infrastructure and technology now.

America has a chance to lead in the global race if we pass a bill that truly levels the playing field for new energy industries and limits the entitlement to federal resources and the control of our energy economy of Big Oil and Coal.

Yet, long-established energy industries have received concessions during the House committee negotiation process that have weakened this bill's ability to deliver on the full promise of clean energy jobs, strong, inclusive and sustaining economy in the 21st century and reducing pollution. Many of the considerations granted the oil, coal, and electricity industries would preserve their market power and profits while transferring the cost of reducing pollution to the taxpayer. We believe that industries should pay to clean up their emissions, not demand loopholes, bailouts, and giveaways from the federal government.

The clean energy jobs bill will best serve America if we can strengthen its provisions to maximize job creation, invest in the skills of our workers and the long-term economic prosperity of our country, and significantly reduce the pollution that has been caused by fossil fuel industries for decades.

In order to achieve these goals by the time it passes the House, we call on the House of Representatives to further the work of the committees and pass the following amendments:

Amendment #1: Ensure more clean energy for America

Increase the Renewable Electricity Standard to 30 percent by 2020 combined renewable energy and energy efficiency to deliver more clean energy jobs to the U.S. economy more quickly. Utilities would have to achieve 17 percent mandatory renewables and 10 percent mandatory efficiency by 2020, while maintaining flexibility to do either with 3 percent.

Amendment #2: Hold Polluters accountable

Restore authority to the EPA to regulate carbon emissions from power plants under the Clean Air Act.

Amendment #3: Create more Clean Energy Jobs for America and Build Resiliency to Climate Change

Reduce allocations to polluting industries in order to supplement allowance accounts that would bolster green job development and protection of vulnerable communities that are impacted first and worst by climate change. Shave allocations from fossil fuel producers and redistribute to programs that deliver energy efficiency and renewable energy, create green jobs and train workers to fill them, and protect natural resources and vulnerable communities here and around the world.

We expect an effort on the House floor to roll back the already weakened target for reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 2020. Our groups will work to turn back this effort. Our organizations stand ready to work with Chairmen Waxman and Markey, the House leadership, and other Committees to strengthen and improve this bill to fulfill the promise of the historic opportunity before us. The U.S. can emerge from this process with legislation that effectively spurs clean economic development, powers our nation with efficient, renewable, home-grown energy sources, and establishes a carbon reduction plan that can give us the credibility to lead the international community to a global agreement. Given a chance, American innovation and ingenuity can lead us out of this crisis into long-term and broadly shared economic prosperity.

We will work tirelessly to accomplish that goal.

Sincerely,

1Sky

Acorn

Environment America

Green for All

Health Care Without Harm

Oxfam

MoveOn

Rock the Vote

Sierra Club

US Action

Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

CC The Honorable Henry A. Waxman

The Honorable Ed Markey