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Record Type: Record

To: Phil Cooney/CEQ/EOP@EOP

CC:

Subject: Phil, thanks for calling and

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Dear Phil,

Thanks for calling and asking for our help. I know you're in crisis mode, but from our end it is a most welcome change from the Administration's SOP, which is to tell conservatives to stop bothering them and to shut up. So it's nice to know we're needed once in a while. I want to help you cool things down, but after consulting with the team, I think that what we can do is limited until there is an official statement from the Administration repudiating the report to the UNFCCC and disavowing large parts of it.

As I said, we made the decision this morning to do as much as we could to deflect criticism by blaming EPA for freelancing. It seems to me that the folks at EPA are the obvious fall guys, and we would only hope that the fall guy (or gal) should be as high up as possible. I have done several interviews and have stressed that the president needs to get everyone rowing in the same direction. Perhaps tomorrow we will call for Whitman to be fired. I know that that doesn't sound like much help, but it seems to me that our only leverage to push you in the right direction is to drive a wedge between the President and those in the Administration who think that they are serving the president's best interests by pushing this rubbish.

The references to the National Assessment in the report are most hurtful to us because we dropped our lawsuit last September 6th after receiving a written assurance that the National Assessment did not represent "policy positions or official statements of the U. S. government." The previous communication from the U. S. government to the UNFCCC was a detailed criticism of the IPCC's Third Assessment Report that reflected that agreement and also implied a disavowal of the National Assessment. So the new transmittal to the UNCCC looks to us much like it looks to the New York Times.

So I'm willing and ready to help, but it won't be possible to do much without some sort of backtracking from the Administration. Unless that occurs, then you have handed an awful lot of ammunition to Jim Jeffords, and the only way we will be able to fight him and all his allies in the Congress is to get much more strident and noisy. Even if the Administration does move quickly to get back on the right side of the issue, it may be too late to save our side in the Senate from being squashed. If it were only this one little disaster we could all lock arms and weather the assault, but this Administration has managed, whether through incompetence or intention, to create one disaster after another and then to expect its allies to clean up the mess. I don't know whether we have the resources to clean up this one.

Best,  
Myron.