



**THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND GLOBAL WARMING**

**Opening Statement for Edward J. Markey (MA-07)
“Youth Leadership for Clean Energy and a Healthy Climate”
Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming
November 4, 2007**

Good morning.

Today the Select Committee received testimony from 5 representatives of a youth movement that is demanding to be heard and deserves to be heard, not just by members of Congress, but by decision makers young and old – in business, in government, in town meetings and city halls, and not just in the United States and the developed world, but also in developing countries in Africa and South America, and in India and China. It echoes movements of the past, but it is all about the future. This time young people are standing together as one force asking for action; action from our government that will ensure a clean energy and healthy climate future.

Adults sometimes have a hard time listening to people younger than they, but in this case, it is the youth of the world that have the most standing to be heard. When the world’s science community says that the planet is heating up dangerously as a result of global warming pollution, they are talking about the future of the people in this room.

On Saturday and Sunday, over 5,500 student activist and youth leaders--the pulse of a new politics and new direction--gathered at the University of Maryland to push forth solutions to the real threat of our climate and energy crisis. I am told that it was the largest conference ever held in the United States on climate change. These young people, representing every single congressional district are our future—a future that is imperiled by effects of climate change and energy policies built on cheap coal and imported oil.

They speak for millions of other young people with the same concerns. In a recent survey conducted in February of 2007, 81 percent of young adults recognized that global warming is “real”. We as a government, and as a nation are faced with a decision—“will we act NOW to ensure a clean energy and healthy climate future for the prosperity, security, and health of future generation?”

The goal is to cap the world’s carbon emissions at levels that will keep temperatures from rising dangerously. The Congress is considering legislation that would accomplish that goal. I am a cosponsor of legislation that would require the United States to reduce emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, and it is clear to me that anything less than an 80 percent goal for 2050 is compromising the future of our children. When it comes to the future of our children we can’t afford less.

But the Congress needs to be educated about this subject, and then educated again, and again. That is partly why Speaker Pelosi formed the Select Committee, because she wanted at least one panel here in Congress to be spending full-time on this subject, pressing for action every day of every week. She also demanded that the House pass an Energy bill that got us started dealing with these issues even before we reached the issue of capping carbon, and we haven't done that. In the next 6 weeks the House and the Senate will take some very key votes on the Energy bill, testing whether we have the wisdom to adopt tough new standards for automobiles and buildings and electricity generation and cellulosic ethanol that moves us away from the old energy agenda. If these votes go well, we will have the momentum we need to push ahead on a cap-auction-and trade bill that will truly transform our energy world. *We cannot do less than pass this energy bill, but we want more -- much more -- if we are to stop global warming.*

This is our chance and this is our time to fix the policies that now threaten the planet. So there couldn't be a better time to hear from you.