

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 14, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Republican Leader Boehner:

We are writing with concern that the current version of legislation to create an economy-wide cap and trade program, the “American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009,” fails to reflect the current economic challenges which all Americans face and fails to include major opportunities for achieving energy independence.

The approach taken in the current proposal places an additional burden on Americans who already face rising unemployment rates, fallen home and retirement fund values, and a challenging credit market. This approach will clearly fail to gather the support of the majority of Americans at a time when we cannot afford to delay in advancing our renewable energy sources and lessening our dependence on foreign sources of oil and gas. As this debate begins in the House Energy and Commerce Committee, we hope that the Committee can work together with Congressional leaders, and with the Administration, to instead develop legislation to bring our common interests together in a sustainable form.

In particular, the following principles should be paramount in any legislation moving forward:

- Standardized reporting of emissions is the first step to achieving substantial GHG reductions and must form the basis of any mandatory program.
- Mandatory GHG reductions are necessary, and long-term reduction targets will provide a clear signal for investment and businesses to move forward.
- Near-term opportunities for cost-effective, verifiable GHG reductions, including offsets, and improved efficiencies should be encouraged and pursued.
- A market-based program has the most potential for minimizing costs and maximizing innovation.
- Consumers throughout the country would bear the majority of program costs, so consumers should receive a substantial amount of value associated with allowance distribution.

- Recent emissions trends globally have made it very clear that any future impacts are global, and moving in the right direction ultimately requires commitments by all of the major emitting countries.
- Legislation must address the job losses we are seeing. Encouraging the rapid advancement and deployment of new technologies over the coming decades that will provide new domestic jobs in research and manufacturing are crucial.
- Coal and nuclear energy inputs play vital roles in meeting our existing needs and will continue to be important in the future, so legislation should encourage the safe and responsible use of the related critical technologies.
- Legislation must include an increased emphasis on improving energy efficiency nationwide and on accelerating the development of alternative and renewable sources of energy.
- We must recognize in any cap and trade legislation that businesses and consumers living all across the country cannot endure drastic price increases in electricity or natural gas, and they must be helped as we make a transition to a low-carbon economy.

The willingness of both parties to achieve energy independence provides us with great opportunity. Job growth, economic development and innovation must be at the forefront of legislation confronting our energy challenges. Americans agree that we should work toward a bipartisan product in the weeks and months ahead. Reaching that point may take time and active engagement of various Members of this House, but our actions will set the tone for our nation's economy for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration of our input on this important issue. We look forward to working with you as the process moves forward.

Sincerely,

MARY BONO MACK
Member of Congress

VERNON J. EHLERS
Member of Congress

MARK STEVEN KIRK
Member of Congress

MICHAEL N. CASTLE
Member of Congress

JOHN M. McHUGH
Member of Congress

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
Member of Congress