

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 14, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senator
Co-Chair
Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling
United States Representative
Co-Chair
Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Murray and Representative Hensarling,

As members of the House of Representatives Sustainable Energy & Environment Coalition (SEEC), we believe that American leadership in clean energy is of paramount importance to our nation's economic competitiveness, job growth, energy and national security, and in addressing the threat of catastrophic climate change. As your committee continues its deliberations toward addressing the unsustainable federal deficit, and sets priorities for federal spending for the coming decade, we urge you to prioritize robust investments and incentives supporting domestic innovation, commercialization, manufacturing, and deployment of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies and resources.

For far too long America has been heavily dependent on foreign oil – sending hundreds of billions of dollars overseas every year in order to power our cars and heat our homes.ⁱ Moreover, as world population soars to nine billion people by the year 2050,ⁱⁱ and more nations modernize their economies, demand for energy has begun to strain supplies of traditional energy resources,ⁱⁱⁱ and related greenhouse gas pollution is threatening the health of our global climate.^{iv}

These are significant challenges, but they also present unique economic opportunities for American businesses. The world is turning increasingly toward cleaner, more efficient energy generation and consumption, and as leaders we must make the investments and lay the policy foundations that will allow our domestic industries to thrive in this twenty-first century economic reality.

Fortunately, American clean energy industries are growing. At a time of high unemployment and generally sluggish economic growth, some states contain burgeoning clean tech sectors. A recent Brookings Institution report, *Sizing the Clean Economy: A National and Regional Green Jobs Assessment* found that clean tech industries grew at 8.3 percent annually between 2003-2010 – a much faster pace than the American economy at-large, and provided high-paying jobs in manufacturing and export-intensive industries.^v And despite a recent high-profile bankruptcy, the American solar industry is growing; with U.S. demand for solar photovoltaic installations increasing by 69 percent over the last year.^{vi} Domestic wind power, energy efficiency, and related clean energy industries have also shown considerable growth.^{vii}

Unfortunately, our foreign economic competitors have recognized the economic opportunities of clean energy and have moved much more aggressively to take the global lead in these industries. China has become the leading exporter of solar and wind energy technologies, and its booming clean energy industries are creating 100,000 jobs every year.^{viii} Meanwhile, Japan and South Korea lead the globe in the production of battery technologies to power electric and hybrid electric vehicles,^{ix} and Germany in 2010 surpassed the United States in its clean energy investments.^x

If America is to compete in these global twenty-first century energy industries, the federal government must lead the way with the investments, incentives, and policies that will allow domestic clean tech innovators to thrive. This segment of the global economy is growing and if we want to be competitive we need to catalyze additional private investment in the United States instead of elsewhere in the world market. By doing so, we can put the United States on a path of growth for years to come.

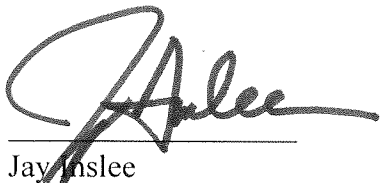
America's leading business and policy voices from across the political spectrum have called for a national focus on clean energy. The American Energy Innovation Council – a nonpartisan coalition of America's most successful business leaders, including Bill Gates, Norm Augustine, John Doerr, and others – has called for the federal government to invest \$16 billion per year in clean energy research and development, and for a governmental role deploying commercial-scale clean energy technologies, among other policies.^{xi}

Similarly, a diverse group of think tanks like Brookings, the Breakthrough Institute, and the American Enterprise Institute,^{xii} and opinion leaders ranging from Thomas Friedman^{xiii} to David Brooks^{xiv} have all called for federal investments developing twenty-first century clean energy technologies. Moreover, the American public overwhelmingly supports increased federal support for clean energy. Recent opinion research found that “voters believe that the clean energy economy is here and is growing, and they want their state to have a part of it.”^{xv}

As your committee examines the federal budget and considers necessary cuts, revenues, and investments, we urge you to prioritize federal support for the American jobs that will be created by clean energy, and a more prosperous, sustainable, and secure American economic future.

Sincerely,

The House of Representatives Sustainable Energy & Environment Coalition



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Co-Chair, Sustainable Energy
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Steve Israel
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, Sustainable Energy
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Gerry Connolly
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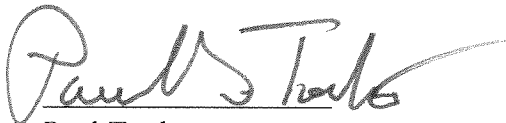
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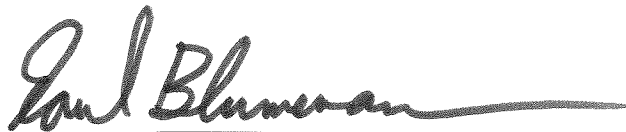
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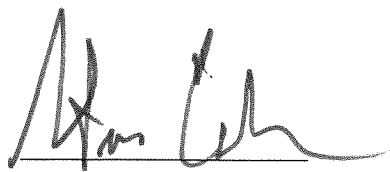
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Susan Davis

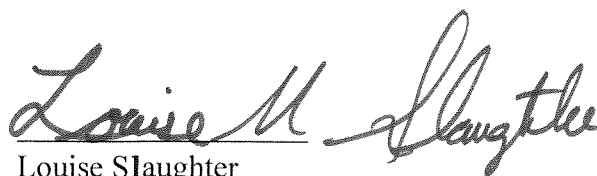
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Donna Christensen
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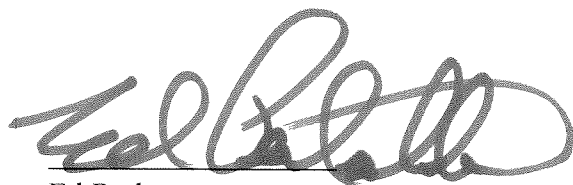
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CC: The Honorable Max Baucus, United States Senator
The Honorable Xavier Becerra, United States Representative
The Honorable Dave Camp, United States Representative
The Honorable James Clyburn, United States Representative
The Honorable John Kerry, United States Senator
The Honorable Jon Kyl, United States Senator
The Honorable Rob Portman, United States Senator
The Honorable Pat Toomey, United States Senator
The Honorable Fred Upton, United States Representative
The Honorable Chris Van Hollen, United States Representative

ⁱ Center for American Progress (CAP), *Oil Dependence is a Dangerous Habit*, January 13, 2010

ⁱⁱ United Nations, press release: 'World population to exceed 9 billion by 2050,' March 19, 2009, <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wpp2008/pressrelease.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ *Why Your World is About to Get a Whole Lot Smaller*, by Jeff Rubin, published by Random House, May 2009

^{iv} National Academy of Sciences, *America's Climate Choices*, May 2010, <http://dels.nas.edu/Report/Americas-Climate-Choices/12781>

^v Brookings Institution, *Sizing the Clean Economy: A National and Regional Green Jobs Assessment*, July 2011, http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/0713_clean_economy.aspx

^{vi} Solar Energy Industries Association, *U.S. Solar Market Insight, Second Quarter 2011*, September 2011, <http://www.seia.org/galleries/pdf/SMI-Q2-2011-ES.pdf>

^{vii} Brookings Institution, *Sizing the Clean Economy: A National and Regional Green Jobs Assessment*, July 2011, http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/0713_clean_economy.aspx

^{viii} New York Times, *China Leading the Global Race to Make Clean Energy*, January 30, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/31/business/energy-environment/31renew.html>

^{ix} Denver Post, *Global Race for Innovative Technology is Heating Up*, February 6, 2011, http://www.denverpost.com/business/ci_17300445

^x Pew Charitable Trusts, *Who's Winning the Clean Energy Race*, March 29, 2011, <http://www.pewenvironment.org/news-room/other-resources/investing-in-clean-power-329295>

^{xi} American Energy Innovation Council, *Catalyzing Ingenuity*, September 13, 2010, <http://www.americanenergyinnovation.org/2011-executive-summary>, and *A Business Plan for America's Energy Future*, June 2010, <http://www.americanenergyinnovation.org/executive-summary>

^{xii} American Enterprise Institute, Breakthrough Institute, Brookings Institution, *Post Partisan Power*, October 2010, http://www.politico.com/static/PPM170_101012_postpartisan.html

^{xiii} *Hot, Flat and Crowded*, by Thomas Friedman, published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, September 2008

^{xiv} New York Times, *American Power Act*, by David Brooks, April 29, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/30/opinion/30brooks.html>

^{xv} Grist, *In Solyndra's wake, polling finds support for clean energy remains strong*, September 28, 2011, <http://www.grist.org/renewable-energy/2011-09-28-solyndra-wake-poll-finds-support-for-clean-energy-still-strong>