

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE U.S. SENATE

The U.S. Senate is about to begin an historic debate over whether to pass comprehensive legislation to create a clean energy economy and combat climate change. We are writing this open letter to urge the Senate to pass a bill this year that will reduce U.S. emissions of greenhouse gases and harness market forces to spur technological innovation, invest in effective solutions, and jumpstart a clean energy economy – both in the U.S. and around the world.

We have reformed business practices in order to curb emissions. In our experience, these changes have not only been good for the climate, they've been good for business. We are now urging Congress to undertake comparable reforms on behalf of our nation, for the benefit of all nations. In June, the House of Representatives did its part by passing the American Clean Energy and Security Act. We now ask the Senate to pass its own legislation to build a 21st century clean energy economy and address the global challenge of climate change. We need to ensure that U.S. climate legislation makes major reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions in an economically sound way across the U.S. economy.

The scientific evidence is clear. In a recently released study begun under the Bush Administration, a blue-ribbon panel of scientists details the damaging climate impacts already affecting our nation with negative consequences for our farms and forests, our crops and coastlines, and our wildlife and water resources. A rapidly changing climate is reshaping the American landscape and poses a long-term threat to our nation's economy and to our children's future. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned that unless global emissions of greenhouse gases peak and begin to decline in the next 10-15 years, we are likely to face severe and even catastrophic impacts.

Our companies have long recognized that unchecked carbon emissions are resulting in large-scale climate change that threatens serious economic, social and environmental consequences. We also recognize that this is a global challenge requiring a global response. As leading companies committed to creating real solutions, we are proving that it is possible to grow our businesses while reducing our collective climate impact. We recognize that ignoring climate change is not an option. The real threat to our long-term economic growth is a failure to take action.

With this joint letter, we wish to make clear to the American public and their elected officials that leading voices in the business community believe it is in our interest for the U.S. to act swiftly to address climate change. Passing legislation to cap greenhouse gas emissions will send a strong signal to the private sector unleashing new business opportunities, leveling the playing field for all U.S. businesses and ensuring that the U.S. economy can compete in growing global markets for clean energy. By acting now, in advance of critically important climate talks in Copenhagen this December, the Senate will show that the U.S. takes climate change seriously and intends to lead the world to a solution.

America can and must prosper in the face of growing climate change. Our companies have taken the first step by showing the economic opportunities of strong climate action. Now it is the Senate's turn. For the sake of our economy, our national security and our children's future, we urge you to act without delay.

