

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

February 10, 2010

Dear Senator,

As communities and people of faith, we are called to protect and serve God's great Creation and work for justice for all of God's people. We believe that the United States must take all appropriate and available actions to prevent the worst impacts of climate change; we therefore urge you to oppose any efforts to undermine the authority of the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. In particular, we urge you to work for the defeat of Senator Murkowski's (AK) proposal that would prevent the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from going forward with greenhouse gas regulations under the Clean Air Act (CAA) under the Congressional Review Act (CRA).

The CAA has a strong history of reducing pollution and protecting God's children and God's Creation, successfully decreasing the prevalence of acid rain, responding to health threatening smog and ozone problems faced in our major urban areas, and generally improving the air quality of our nation in the decades since its passage. It is only appropriate that the CAA continue to oversee any and all air-related challenges that we face. In 2007, the Supreme Court ruled that greenhouse gas emissions, the leading cause of climate change are, in fact, covered under the CAA and could be regulated by the EPA. New CAA regulations limiting greenhouse gas emissions will also ensure that the largest emitters, such as power plants and factories, use the best available technologies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and begin to shift to sustainable forms of energy.

The EPA, in its efforts to implement the CAA in an appropriate manner, has already proposed to tailor the CAA to exempt small carbon emitters and apply them only to large sources that have long been subject to similar standards for other pollutants. However, Senator Murkowski's proposed amendment would prevent these regulations from moving forward, allowing our nation's substantial contribution to global climate change to continue unchecked and exposing vulnerable communities to the impacts of climate change. In addition, this attempt to undermine the authority of the EPA and the CAA to regulate greenhouse gas emissions will interfere with an effective U.S. response to this global crisis.

Senator Murkowski's proposal threatens the well being of at risk communities, undermines efforts to shift to a sustainable energy future, and inevitably will impact the right of all of God's children to live in a healthy world. Congress should instead focus its efforts on passing comprehensive climate legislation, a complementary path to the EPA's regulation of greenhouse gases, as a means to ensure a just and sustainable future for God's Creation.

Sincerely,

Church World Service
Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
The Episcopal Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Jewish Reconstructionist Federation
National Council of Churches USA
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Presbyterian Church (USA) Washington Office
The Missionary Oblates, Justice Peace/Integrity of Creation Office
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
The United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society
United Methodist Women

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