

BARBARA BOXER, CALIFORNIA, CHAIRMAN

MAX BAUCUS, MONTANA  
JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN, CONNECTICUT  
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE  
HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, NEW YORK  
FRANK R. LAUTENBERG, NEW JERSEY  
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND  
BERNARD SANDERS, VERMONT  
AMY KLOBUCHAR, MINNESOTA  
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND

JAMES M. INHOFE, OKLAHOMA  
JOHN W. WARNER, VIRGINIA  
GEORGE V. VOINOVICH, OHIO  
JOHNNY ISAKSON, GEORGIA  
DAVID VITTER, LOUISIANA  
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING  
LARRY E. CRAIG, IDAHO  
LAMAR ALEXANDER, TENNESSEE  
CHRISTOPHER S. BOND, MISSOURI

# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

BETTINA POIRIER, STAFF DIRECTOR  
ANDREW WHEELER, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

March 26, 2008

The Honorable Stephen Johnson, Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Johnson:

I understand that you and a substantial number of EPA staff members are planning a trip to Australia, and that this trip has made you unavailable to testify before this Committee on certain important matters through much of April.

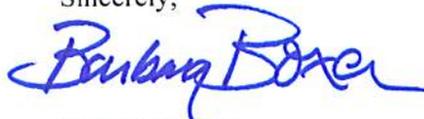
I am deeply concerned that you will be spending a large amount of scarce agency funds and staff resources on such an expensive trip while the President has proposed a series of devastating cuts in EPA's budget for environmental programs. For example, for this year (Fiscal Year 2008), President Bush proposed to cut EPA's budget by over \$500 million dollars from the previous year's enacted levels. I am dismayed that again this year the President is proposing to cut EPA's funds. The President would cut hundreds of millions of dollars from EPA's budget for such important activities as reducing pollution of streams and lakes by sewage treatment plants, cleaning up hazardous waste sites, conducting global warming research and programs, ensuring environmental justice, and carrying out many other crucial programs. If your goal is to learn about actions to address global warming, I suggest that you visit California, which has moved ahead aggressively with greenhouse gas controls. I invited you to testify in January in California on global warming pollution from vehicles, but you declined.

In order for the Committee to understand your trip and its implications, please provide the following information:

1. How many staff and at what levels will be participating in your trip or doing advance work for it? For each staff person, please indicate the time that they will dedicate to the trip, how long they will be on travel, and where they will go.
2. What is the estimated total cost of this trip, how much funding will be left in your office's international travel budget once the trip is completed, and from which accounts are the funds coming?
3. Will there be sufficient funds for you and EPA staff to travel to the G8 meeting and other important international meetings later this year?
4. What are the specific reasons for the trip? Will you dedicate comparable time and resources to environmental programs with Mexico, India, China, Canada, and other established international EPA priorities?
5. When, how, and by whom was this trip identified as a high priority?

Please provide answers to these questions before you depart, and no later than March 31, 2008. If you have any questions, please contact Erik Olson of the Committee's staff at 202-224-8832. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer  
Chairman