United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 24, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We write to express our strong support for the Paris Climate Agreement, and to urge you to keep the United States party to the agreement.

The reality of climate change is unforgiving. The three hottest years ever recorded were 2016, 2015, and 2014. The global temperature in 2017 is on pace to break this record yet again. American communities are already feeling the impacts of climate change. City streets from Boston to Baltimore to Miami are flooding at high tide. Western states are just now emerging from years of punishing drought. In recent weeks, extreme downpours have led to deadly floods in the South and Midwest. Doctors and scientists have identified climate change as a significant threat to Americans' health. The pace and severity of these changes on a global scale prompted military experts in both the Bush and Obama Administrations to identify climate change as a national security threat. Faith leaders from around the world have called for urgent action to address climate change—and especially its impact on the poorest and most vulnerable. Simply put, climate change puts Americans' health, safety, and livelihoods at risk.

Businesses and the American people have taken notice. In 2015, more than 150 major U.S. companies, from Alcoa to Xerox, signed on to The American Business Act on Climate Pledge ahead of the Paris negotiations, and made their own commitments to reduce emissions, use cleaner energy sources, and boost sustainability. The Pledge reads, in part: "We support the conclusion of a climate change agreement in Paris that takes a strong step forward toward a low-carbon, sustainable future. We recognize that delaying action on climate change will be costly in economic and human terms, while accelerating the transition to a low-carbon economy will produce multiple benefits."

Since that time, more than 1,100 companies of all sizes, with combined annual revenue of $1.2 trillion, have affirmed their commitment for implementing the Paris Agreement by signing the Business Backs Low-Carbon USA pledge. Fossil fuel companies ExxonMobil, BP, and Shell, as well as iconic American companies like Walmart, Microsoft, Google, and Mars, support remaining a party. And just this week, more than 200 global investors representing more than $15 trillion in assets wrote to the heads of the G7 nations, urging leaders to stand by the Paris Agreement. And support for this landmark international agreement goes beyond the corporate world, with majorities of Americans in every state saying that the United States should participate in the Paris Agreement.

While American communities and businesses grapple with the impacts of climate change, we know that this is a global challenge—and it demands a global response. That is why the Paris Climate Agreement is so vital. For the first time, the Paris Agreement provides a platform in which all countries acknowledge that they have a responsibility to do their fair share to curb the carbon pollution that is driving climate change—including other major emitters like China and India.

Backing out of the Paris Agreement now, after the years of painstaking negotiations and strong U.S. leadership it took to get the world to this point, would be a self-inflicted injury to America's credibility and influence on the world stage. Over the next several years, parties to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change will meet to determine how the Paris Agreement will be implemented when it goes into effect in 2020. Issues of longstanding bipartisan interest will be discussed and decided in those meetings, including matters of transparency and verification of emissions reductions from other countries.

A U.S. retreat from the Paris Agreement would isolate us from the 196 nations working together within the framework of the Paris Agreement, reaching outcomes on international economic policy that will effect U.S. interests whether we are party or not. A retreat from Paris would harm the trust, faith, and goodwill that America has earned from other nations, and will inevitably harm our ability to work cooperatively to advance our foreign policy goals. Our allies were insulted by the Bush Administration's decision to withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol, and we suffered real foreign policy and diplomatic setbacks as a result.

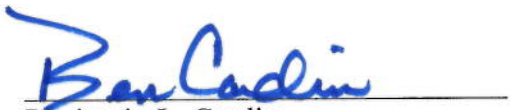
If the United States is not at the table as a participant in this process, our interests will not be represented. We will be left out and left behind, sitting on the sidelines with Syria and Nicaragua, the only other countries in the world not participating in the Paris agreement. Our economy and our small businesses will miss out on vital investment and job opportunities, while the rest of the world moves forward with trillions of dollars of investment in resilient infrastructure, low-carbon energy, sustainable agriculture, and new technologies.

For the sake of our economy, our national security, and Americans' health and future, we ask that the United States remain a party to the Paris Agreement and continue to participate in the UNFCCC process.

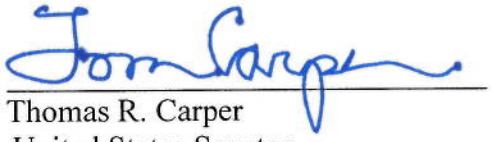
Sincerely,

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



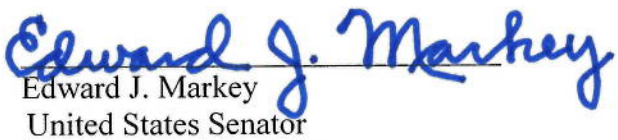
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



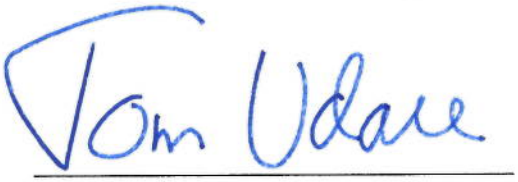
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



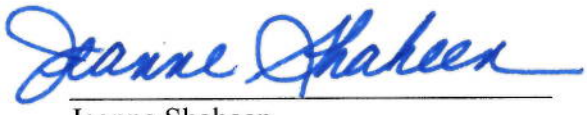
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



Tom Udall
United States Senator



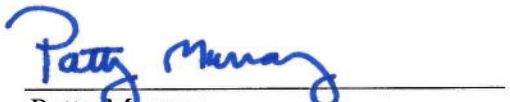
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



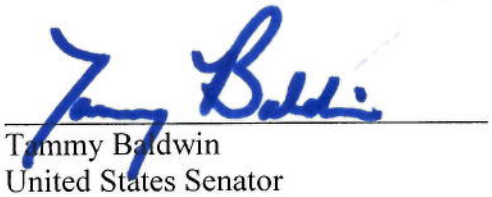
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



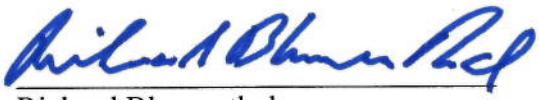
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



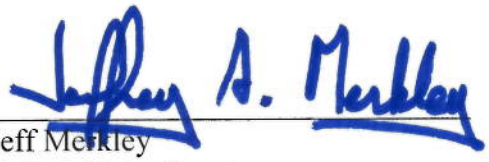
Patty Murray
United States Senator



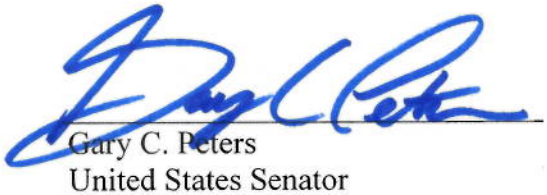
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



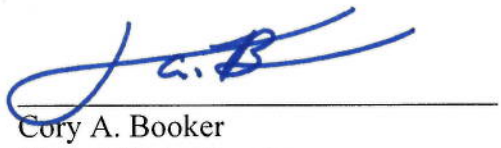
Jeff Merkley
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



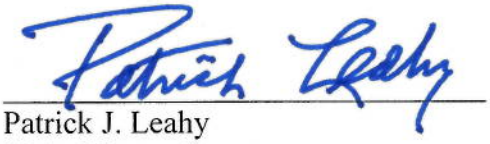
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



Patrick J. Leahy
United States Senator



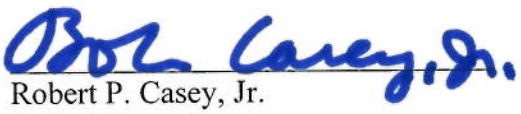
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



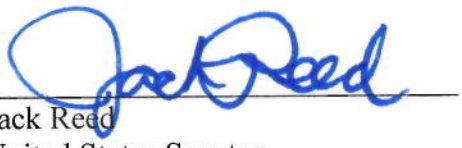
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



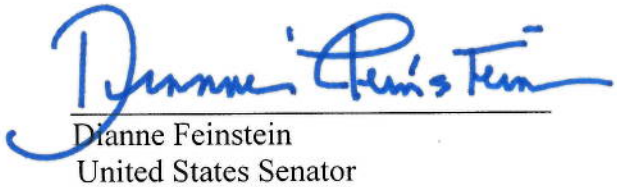
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



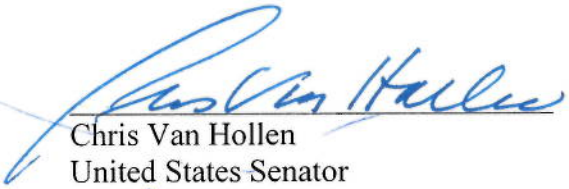
Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



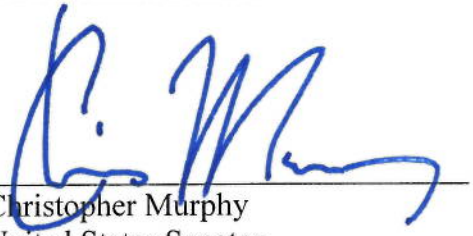
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



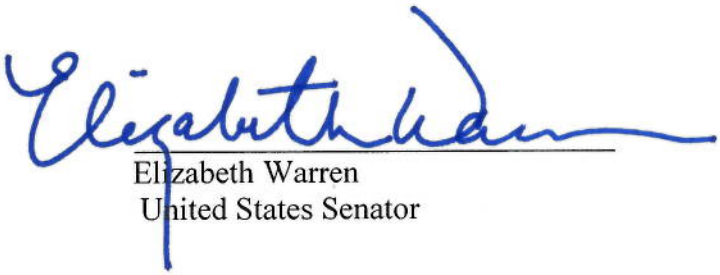
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



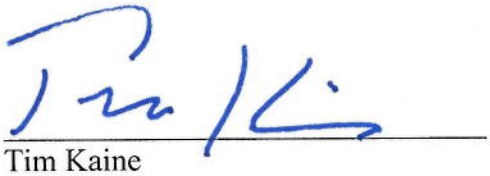
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Christopher Murphy
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator