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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

July 10, 2013

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510-6175

Dear Chairman Boxer:

We want to express our interest in the global warming policy hearing entitled "Climate Change: It's Happening Now" that you have scheduled for July 18, 2013. This hearing is timely in light of the President's recent announcement of a "Climate Action Plan" at Georgetown University, where he committed to a "coordinated assault on a changing climate."[1] In his speech, the President highlighted a mere fraction of the federal actions being taken unilaterally by his Administration to address climate change. Because of the significant interest in and impacts of these actions, we request that you reconsider your decision to exclude the participation of government witnesses from the hearing.

The potential of these government actions to exacerbate the serious economic problems that currently persist justifies asking a panel of federal witnesses, charged with implementing the President's agenda, to testify as to the scope, purpose, and consequences of such unilateral action. Today, only 47% of Americans have a full time job,[2] the workforce participation rate is at its lowest level since the Carter Administration,[3] and the national unemployment rate has exceeded 7.5% for the longest period since the Bureau of Labor Statistics started tracking the national unemployment rate.[4] By the time President Obama leaves office, the federal debt will likely exceed $20 trillion, further frustrating America's future.

The American people should not be kept in the dark regarding the scope of the actions this Administration is taking under the guise of controlling our climate – actions that have the potential to negatively impact employment, job creation, and our national debt. These actions are being taken without China, India, and Russia – some of the world's largest carbon emitters – placing similar constraints on their economies.

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[1] President Barack Obama, Remarks by the President on Climate Change (June 25, 2013).
[2] News Release, U.S Dep't of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, The Employment Situation-June 2013 (July 5, 2013) (*available at* http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf).
[3] U.S. Dep't of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject, 1979-2013. (July 10, 2013) (*available at* http://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet)
[4] CONG. BUDGET OFF., U.S CONGRESS, PUB. NO. 4649, THE BUDGET AND ECONOMIC OUTLOOK: FISCAL YEARS 2013 TO 2023 (2013).

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European nations continue to reconsider their own climate policies as their economies continue to suffer, interest in an international agreement further wanes, global warming continues to poll as one of the issues of least concern to our fellow Americans,[5] and global temperatures continue to fail to meet the climate model predictions of the last thirty years.[6] Enumerated below are just a few important reasons for including a panel of federal witnesses at the July 18 hearing:

1. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has, without providing for public comment or peer review, adjusted upwards the Social Cost of Carbon (SCC)[7] to modify the accounting for benefits claims from regulatory actions. Regulation of greenhouse gases from new and existing sources is set to cripple numerous large scale manufacturing and energy projects across the nation, creating an environment in which foreign countries will become far more attractive for future investment, potentially undermining our economy.

2. For more than nine months, the Treasury Department stonewalled multiple transparency requests regarding internal work on the development of a carbon tax, as well as the sources of funding for international climate commitments that were negotiated behind closed doors.[8]

3. The Department of Interior continues to cut off access to minerals and other natural resources for energy development.[9] It also continues to craft multiple new layers of federal designations and bureaucracy certain to continue the decline in energy production on federal lands. It is critical that Congress has a clear understanding of how the Interior Department plans to utilize federal lands.

4. The Department of Energy's (DOE) "green" energy grant programs have been a disaster by any measure.[10] While the stimulus funds that went to now-bankrupt Solyndra received the most public notoriety, total federal stimulus spending cost $11.25 million for every permanent "green" job,[11] and the DOE Inspector General

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[5] *Climate Change and Financial Instability Seen as Top Global Threats*, PEW RESEARCH CTR. (June 24, 2013), http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/06/24/climate-change-and-financial-instability-seen-as-top-global-threats/#fn-27454-1.

[6] *Climate Science: A Sensitive Matter*, THE ECONOMIST, Mar. 30, 2013, http://www.economist.com/news/science-and-technology/21574461-climate-may-be-heating-up-less-response-greenhouse-gas-emissions.

[7] The White House, Technical Update of the Social Cost of Carbon for Regulatory Impact Analysis, May 2013.

[8] Press Release, Republican Env't and Pub. Works Comm., Vitter: Still No Transparency at Treasury with Carbon Tax E-Mails (Jan. 14, 2013) (*available at* http://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Minority.PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=39ca37b0-a603-b2a4-5349-13e5ddf0a594.

[9] *IER Analysis: Oil and Gas Production Declines on Federal Lands in FY 2011*, INST. FOR ENERGY RESEARCH, Feb. 23, 2012, http://www.instituteforenergyresearch.org/2012/02/23/ier-analysis-oil-and-gas-production-declines-on-federal-lands-in-fy2011/.

[10] Steve Hargreaves, *Obama's Alternative Energy Bankruptcies*, CNN (Oct. 22, 1012, 11:16 PM), http://money.cnn.com/2012/10/22/news/economy/obama-energy-bankruptcies/index.html.

[11] *The Department of Energy Committed $11 Million Per Job*, INST. FOR ENERGY RESEARCH, May 8, 2013, http://www.instituteforenergyresearch.org/2013/05/08/does-11-million-jobs/.

has on more than one occasion found problems with efficiency and other federal grant programs.[12]

An Administration taking such sweeping actions on climate change should be ready to defend those actions before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. We are certain the President would accommodate the Chairman of this Committee in a request to have his Administration officials represent what he so proudly touts as being good for America. There seems to be little point in holding a hearing on climate change policy that excludes witnesses from our own federal government to explain the national climate change "policy" unilaterally established by this Administration. As our government sets in motion a litany of new actions with significant economic implications, we ask that you allow for Congressional oversight of federal policy decisions related to these attempts at controlling the climate.

Sincerely,

David Vitter
Ranking Member
Environment and Public Works

James Inhofe
United States Senate

John Barrasso
United States Senate

Jeff Sessions
United States Senate

Mike Crapo
United States Senate

Roger Wicker
United States Senate

John Boozman
United States Senate

Deb Fischer
United States Senate

[12] THE DEP'T OF ENERGY, OFF. OF INSPECTOR GEN., OFF. OF AUDITS AND INSPECTIONS, OAS-RA-11-14, THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA (2011), *available at* http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/OAS-RA-11-14.pdf