

World Leaders Fail to Deliver a Critically Needed Deal to Tackle Global Warming – 1Sky Campaign Calls for Climate Leadership from Obama and the US Senate

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 19, 2009

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Takoma Park, MD - As the United Nations climate change talks in Copenhagen staggered on, it became clear that they will conclude without reaching the bold and binding global agreement needed to stave off climate catastrophe. In response, 1Sky Campaign Director Gillian Caldwell called upon President Obama and the U.S. Senate to lead by ensuring the passage of bold and comprehensive climate and clean energy legislation as soon as possible.

“Events continue to unfold as we speak, but it is clear that the Copenhagen talks will not result in the fair, ambitious, and binding global treaty that the world desperately needs,” said Caldwell. “The 1Sky campaign pushed hard for President Obama to join the Copenhagen negotiations and we were pleased that he did, but unfortunately the proposals offered by the Obama Administration fell short of what was needed. The hopes of grassroots advocates and civil society leaders for a successful outcome have been dashed largely because the U.S. has yet to take bold action to tackle the climate challenge.”

“Our work is clearly not done yet – the science calls for much more urgent action than what we’ve seen to date, and President Obama has acknowledged that,” Caldwell continued. “Delay only benefits the fossil fuel industries that are reaping record profits while destroying our future. We call upon President Obama and the Senate to take bold action as soon as possible in 2010 to secure our future.”

1Sky and its many partners in the growing movement for real climate solutions had flagged three key points to determine whether the Obama Administration’s efforts in Copenhagen could be deemed a success:

- Acknowledging U.S. responsibility for climate change by making substantial financial investments in the transition;
- Setting goals for short term emission reductions that are consistent with science;
- Using the prominence of the Copenhagen conference to push the U.S. Senate for real action in the coming months.

Caldwell noted that the U.S. Senate’s failure to pass a strong climate bill in 2009 presented a significant roadblock to progress in Copenhagen. “Every day the U.S. Senate delays undermines the U.S.’s negotiating position and diminishes our potential to lead the way in the clean energy economy of the future,” Caldwell said. “President Obama must step up to the challenge and rally the American public behind bold climate legislation and secure a strong bill from the U.S. Senate. The longer we wait, the worse it gets: the International Energy Agency tells us that every year of delay costs \$500 billion.”

Caldwell called for the U.S. to significantly increase its weak proposed emissions reduction of 4% below 1990 levels by 2020, which falls far short of scientific recommendations of 40% reductions. She also called upon the U.S. to ensure significant investments in international climate finance. “The most vulnerable communities need clean pathways out of poverty and humanitarian assistance for climate disruption that they did little to cause,” said Caldwell. “Financial commitments from developed nations are essential to ensure our national and global security, to boost our economy by opening up new clean energy markets and partnerships, and to ensure that poor nations can adapt to climate change while developing sustainably.”

“The Copenhagen talks failed to produce the substantive outcomes the world desperately needs. We are more determined than ever to secure strong U.S. climate legislation and a fair, ambitious and binding global treaty,” Caldwell concluded. “More than 12 million people across the world, including 600,000 in the U.S., raised their voices for strong action before and during the conference. This rapidly growing global grassroots movement will not be denied. We won’t stop short of the real solutions that science and justice demand.”

ISky is a collaborative national campaign for strong federal action to tackle global climate change and invest in building the clean energy economy of the future. As one of the largest national campaigns in the country, ISky combines the force of 500 allied organizations, 182,000 committed climate advocates, 3,100 volunteer Climate Precinct Captains covering more than 390 congressional districts in 50 states, and a team of 43 including 33 organizers in 23 states working to mobilize constituent support.

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