

Scientific Reality and Political Reality Clash in American Power Act

Statement from Bill McKibben, co-founder of 350.org:

Contact:

May Boeve 707.815.0054

Phil Aroneanu 551.486.5833

To confront the climate crisis, the US Senate needs to take major steps towards energy independence. We can see the ugliest face of dirty energy as an oil spill ravages the Gulf and its communities. What we don't see is the ongoing invisible spill of carbon into our atmosphere.

1) 350.org continues to focus on what's scientifically required -- The American Power Act doesn't meet the test of atmospheric science since the targets are very weak, and the offsets mean even they won't be met in time to prevent climate catastrophe.

2) If this is the best bill that political realism allows, then we need to change political reality (hard, but easier than changing chemistry and physics). We're working with allies to massively demonstrate the demand for clean energy all across the country, and the world, on 10/10/10 -- and we hope that you, your organization, and your community will join us.

3) Our partners around the world are dismayed by the weakness of the targets in this bill since many of them will continue to bear the costs of our inadequate response. And in this country, many local organizers and state legislators don't like the curbs put on states to reduce their carbon emissions through comprehensive legislation. The APA allows states to set clean energy quotas for utilities, but doesn't let them cap carbon effectively -- it's wrong to block strong state leadership on climate change.

4) It would be a great shame to damage the Clean Air Act, the greatest legacy of the first Earth Day. The APA attempts to retain some key regulatory powers of the EPA, but more can be improved to keep this vital tool intact.

5) The oil spill disaster in the gulf should be a wake-up call for our country. It's not enough to let states veto offshore drilling in neighboring states. We must end offshore drilling permanently.

In the coming months, 350.org and partners will work together to exert political pressure to act on these recommendations.