

## **EPA Determination on Greenhouse Gases Sets Stage for U.S. Action on Climate Change, Clean Energy Economy**

### ***EPA Addresses Landmark Supreme Court Decision as Nations Convene in Copenhagen to Forge International Solution to Climate Crisis***

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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(Washington – December 7, 2009). U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson today formally determined that greenhouse gas pollution imperils the health and well-being of present and future generations, setting the stage for U.S. action as officials from across the world gather in Copenhagen to forge an international solution to global warming.

“The danger of global warming pollution is clear and present, the solutions are at hand, and the time for action is now,” said [Fred Krupp](#), President of Environmental Defense Fund. “It’s time for Congress to finish its work on U.S. legislation to cap and reduce the 19 million tons of heat-trapping pollution we emit every day. American leadership on climate change will strengthen our security, wean us off of foreign oil, and ensure that America wins the race to clean energy innovation in the global market place.”

Today’s action is required by a landmark 2007 U.S. Supreme Court decision rejecting the Bush EPA’s “laundry list” of reasons not to address global warming pollution under the nation’s clean air laws. The endangerment finding issued today covers six greenhouse gases that drive climate change: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

**Policy Solutions, Not Scare-Tactics.** EPA’s announcement is a wake up call for legislative action by the United States Senate that will reduce global warming pollution and expand America’s clean energy economy. But some seek to delay progress and avoid accountability using scare tactics, absurdly claiming that EPA action will result in a “cow tax.” The reality is that EPA recently took action to shield small sources from liability, proposing a 25,000 ton annual carbon dioxide threshold for regulation. The 25,000 ton threshold is the amount of pollution emitted from the annual energy use of about 2,200 homes, approximately 58,000 barrels of oil consumed, or 130 railcars of coal.

**Order from the U.S. Supreme Court.** In 2003, the Bush EPA denied a 1999 petition to establish greenhouse gas emission standards for motor vehicles under the nation’s clean air laws. The Bush EPA claimed it had no power to limit global warming pollution, expressly reversing prior

EPA legal opinions that had affirmed the Agency's authority to address greenhouse gases. On April 2, 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected EPA's "laundry list of reasons not to regulate" greenhouse gas emissions and instructed EPA to make a decision about the threat of global warming pollution.

**Abrupt Climate Impacts, Threats to Human Health.** EPA's extensive review of the science, conducted as part of its "endangerment" determination, documents: (1) abrupt climate change impacts including the potential deglaciation of the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets and associated effects on sea level rise; (2) the climate-related human health perils for the poor, the elderly, the disabled, and the uninsured, and (3) the expected climate-induced rise in smog pollution and heat-related deaths in major regions of the country.

**Pollution Has Soared.** EPA's action is long overdue. Since citizens petitioned EPA to address global warming pollution in 1999, the nation has discharged nearly 70 billion tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and heat-trapping carbon dioxide concentrations have soared to 385 parts per million.

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