

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Clean Energy and Climate Legislation Released

WASHINGTON (May 12, 2010) -- Senators John Kerry and Joe Lieberman today introduced long-awaited comprehensive clean energy and climate legislation. Noting that over 70 percent of American voters in a recent poll strongly support fast track Congressional action on clean energy and climate legislation, the Natural Resources Defense Council welcomed the legislation, saying it will provide a strong foundation for the upcoming Senate debate on our energy future.

Following is a statement from Frances Beinecke, NRDC President:

“The growing oil catastrophe in the Gulf and the Massey mine disaster have demonstrated beyond any reasonable doubt that we must start now to end our dangerous dependence on dirty energy, move toward safe and clean energy, and steadily cut carbon pollution. The bill released today by Senators Kerry and Lieberman marks an important step toward passage of comprehensive clean energy and climate legislation by the Senate.

“Senators Kerry and Lieberman understand that Congress must enact a comprehensive clean energy and climate bill this year that puts America in control of our energy future. Senators Kerry and Lieberman should be commended for their hard work, determination and leadership on this issue.

“The core carbon pollution limits in the bill, covering all major pollution sources, are a solid foundation for Senate legislation. These emission limits, which will get tighter every year, will drive investments in clean energy that create jobs, cut pollution, and end our addiction to oil from dangerous locations, both offshore and overseas.

“The bill would be more effective if its overall pollution limits were backed up by minimum performance standards for the largest polluters. We will work to strengthen the bill to preserve more of the Clean Air Act's proven approach to cutting air pollution.

“Americans emphatically insist that Congress adopt comprehensive clean energy and climate legislation. We now look to President Obama and Majority Leader Reid to work with Senators of good will from both sides of the aisle to pass effective legislation without delay.

“As the bill moves forward in the Senate, NRDC will work to strengthen the legislation in several ways:

“We believe there must be a moratorium on new offshore drilling until the causes of the Gulf Coast disaster are fully and independently investigated and a stringent new safety inspection regime is put in place to protect our coastlines and marine life. Further, financial incentives for states to allow more offshore drilling have absolutely no place in this bill, and NRDC will work

with allies in the Senate to eliminate them as the process goes forward.

“The subsidies for nuclear power in the proposed bill are excessive, and the proposed weakening of safety and environmental licensing review is ill-advised. NRDC opposes these provisions. Existing federal policy already provides subsidies for a few standardized nuclear units of new design in order to confirm their advertised potential for safe, cost-effective, environmentally benign nuclear power generation. Any follow-on units should have to compete on a level playing field with other low-carbon energy sources to meet the bill’s emission limits.

“NRDC will work to strengthen the bill’s energy efficiency and forest protection provisions as the process moves forward. Energy efficiency improvements are the cheapest, fastest, and cleanest way to reduce carbon pollution. Equally, we will work to ensure that final legislation cuts emissions without degrading forests here or abroad.”

Read more at Frances Beinecke’s

blog: http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/fbeinecke/clean_energy_bill_released_now.html

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The Natural Resources Defense Council is a national, non-profit organization of scientists, lawyers and environmental specialists dedicated to protecting public health and the environment. Founded in 1970, NRDC has more than 1.3 million members and e-activists nationwide, served from offices in New York, Washington, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Beijing. More information is available at www.nrdc.org.