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Dangerous Senate Bill Threatens to Stymie Fight Against Global Warming

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Friends of the Earth’s president, Erich Pica, had the following response to the [four-page](#) and [21-page](#) summaries of the “American Power Act” cap-and-trade proposal by Senators John Kerry and Joe Lieberman that leaked today:

“The bill described in these summaries would scrap crucial tools for solving the climate crisis while locking in billions in polluter payouts. It would be a step backward in the fight against climate disruption—great for polluters, but bad for people and the planet.

“The bill would decimate the Clean Air Act as it applies to global warming, and it would undercut states’ ability to seek innovative solutions. The bill would also hand billions in giveaways to corporate polluters, including the oil, coal, nuclear and agribusiness industries, while creating a risky new subprime carbon market for Wall Street traders. All this is in exchange for pollution reduction goals far weaker than what scientists say are needed and myriad loopholes. No wonder so many corporate polluters are reportedly poised to welcome this bill’s introduction.

“The fact that the bill contemplates expanded offshore drilling while millions of gallons of oil are still gushing into the Gulf of Mexico underscores the extent to which it has been co-opted by polluters. It doesn’t have to be this way. Our country can be powered with 100 percent clean energy. The only thing standing in the way is a lack of political leadership.

“Without dramatic improvements this bill should not be passed, and senators should consider alternatives. In the meantime, existing tools like the Clean Air Act must be put to work. More broadly, we must end a system in which polluter lobbyists exercise effective veto power in Congress. Our economy, global security, and the health of the public are all at stake.”

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Friends of the Earth and our network of grassroots groups in 77 countries fight to create a more healthy, just world. Our current campaigns focus on clean energy and solutions to global warming, protecting people from toxic and new, potentially harmful technologies, and promoting smarter, low-pollution transportation alternatives.