

**Audubon Society ♦ Defenders of Wildlife ♦ Earthjustice ♦ Environment America
Friends of the Earth ♦ National Wildlife Federation ♦ Natural Resources Defense Council
Sierra Club ♦ Southern Environmental Law Center ♦ The Wilderness Society
Union of Concerned Scientists**

February 14, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Office of the Speaker
U.S Capitol 232

The Honorable Harry Reid
Office of the Leader
U.S. Capitol 221

The Honorable John Dingell
Chair, Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chair, Environment and Public Works
456 Senate Dirksen Office Building

The Honorable Colin Peterson
Chair, House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building

The Honorable Thomas Harkin
Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture
328A Senate Russell Office Building

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Reid, Chairman Dingell, Chairman Boxer, Chairman Peterson,
Chairman Harkin,

As Congress continues to address the critical issues of energy security and global warming, we write to thank you once again for your leadership in securing significant advances in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) and the importance of maintaining this trajectory going forward.

While the historic CAFE and energy efficiency provisions have received much of the attention, Congress should also be congratulated for including much-needed environmental safeguards in the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). These safeguards will help ensure that increasing the production of homegrown energy provides real global warming benefits while protecting sensitive lands.

Without EISA's climate and land safeguards the benefits of the RFS would rapidly decrease and make biofuels just another dirty fuel. Produced without effective global warming standards, biofuels can significantly increase global warming pollution rather than reduce it. The amendments enacted in EISA require that all parts of biofuels production are accounted for, so that biofuels production does not result in cutting down forests or plowing under native grasslands—which would release the millions of tons of carbon they currently store. For example, if just 10% of the renewable fuels came from converted forest lands, the RFS could have no climate benefit at all, or worse. The greenhouse gas standards also help address the importation of biofuels produced from clearing ecosystems like the Amazon Rainforest and wildlife habitat for endangered species around the world.

Equally important are EISA's lands protections contained in the definition of renewable biomass. These provisions incentivize the production of plentiful biofuel feedstocks without putting important wildlife habitat, natural forests, native grasslands, and public lands in our gas tanks. The result of a broad stakeholder process, EISA's RFS environmental safeguards represent an important step forward in helping to ensure that the biofuels mandate results in more environmentally sound renewable fuels.

As Congress proceeds throughout this next year to address agriculture, energy and global warming legislation, in whatever forum, we urge you to protect the gains already achieved and continue your commitment to addressing global warming in an environmentally sustainable way. Once again, we congratulate you for the critical steps forward made in EISA and look forward to working with you to identify new opportunities to further shape a renewable energy future.

Sincerely,

Brian Moore
Director, Budget and Appropriations
Audubon Society

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Defenders of Wildlife

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