

Governor Schwarzenegger Sends U.S. Senate Leaders Letter on Clean Air Act

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today sent the following letter to U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell urging them to oppose any effort in the Senate to block the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to enforce the Clean Air Act to fight global climate change.

January 21, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid and Senator McConnell,

I am writing to urge you to reject efforts to block enforcement of Clean Air Act requirements to reduce carbon dioxide and other global climate change pollutants. The Clean Air Act is a proven law with a nearly 40-year track record of cost-effectively cutting pollution to protect our citizens and the environment and to drive technological innovation. Now is the time to put this law to work to fight global warming, cut America's dependence on oil and build a 21st Century clean energy economy.

Among the law's accomplishments are reducing children's exposure to toxic lead by phasing lead out of gasoline, achieving substantial reductions in dangerous smog and soot pollution in many American cities and preserving lakes, streams, forests and ecosystems from damaging acid rain. Since 1990, when President George Bush signed the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments into law with overwhelming bipartisan support, emissions of six common pollutants have declined by 41 percent, while gross domestic product has grown by 64 percent. In a landmark 2007 decision, the Supreme Court ruled that the Clean Air Act covers global climate change pollutants.

New Clean Air Act standards to reduce global climate change pollution from America's cars and light trucks, pioneered by California and proposed as a national standard by President Obama in 2009, will reduce the nation's oil dependence, create jobs making more efficient and competitive vehicles and save consumers money at the pump - all while cutting pollution. Further Clean Air Act standards will ensure that the largest stationary sources of emissions use modern technology to reduce their global warming pollution and move to cleaner energy.

Instead of embracing this progress and following the lead of states like California to combat pollution, a resolution or amendment to block all or part of the Clean Air Act would turn our back on the overwhelming science of climate change and further exacerbate, rather than solve, the crippling uncertainty facing industry and holding back billions of dollars in job-creating clean energy investments all across the country.

California and other pioneering states have worked hard over the last decade, in the absence of federal leadership, to fight global warming and move to clean energy. However, global warming is a challenge that requires leadership at every level of government. It is past time for the United States to rise to this challenge and in doing so build a more prosperous and sustainable future.

Please oppose any effort in the Senate to block the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to enforce the Clean Air Act to fight global climate change. Instead, please do everything you can to ensure that the Senate passes the strong clean energy and global warming legislation that the country needs to build a clean energy economy and protect the environment.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger

cc: The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
The Honorable Barbara Boxer