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WASHINGTON—In response to the White House announcement today on Obama's Copenhagen attendance, Greenpeace USA Global Warming Campaign Director Damon Moglen issued the following statement:

“In a statement today, the Obama administration announced that the President will attend the international climate talks in Copenhagen on December 9th. More than a week before international leaders will arrive to show their commitment to shaping an ambitious and comprehensive climate deal.

The administration's announcement proposes the same inadequate emissions targets that were included in the House-passed climate legislation. By taking his cues from a Congress heavily influenced by the fossil fuel industry, Obama continues to shirk domestic and international leadership on climate policy.

Attending the talks on December 9th amounts to nothing more than President Obama taking a photo opportunity on his way to pick up the Nobel Peace Prize. He is leaving his delegation to the unenviable task of negotiating with a US proposal that the international community cannot take seriously. Once again, we have to say to President Obama, 'Right city, wrong date.' Greenpeace is calling for

the President to attend on December 18th, commit the US to climate policy the world needs, and earn the Nobel Peace Prize that he is on his way to accept.

The proposed emissions reductions target – 17% below 2005 levels by 2020 – is less than one seventh of what the European Union leaders have said they are prepared to commit. The proposed reduction refers to 2005 emissions and not the standard 1990 baseline used by scientists and policymakers around the world. Arranging the numbers this way may be more politically palatable, but it misleads the public on information key to its welfare.

Science calls for the United States and the developed world to cut pollution by at least 25 to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80 to 95 percent by 2050. Using this accepted standard, the announced target that the U.S. plans to bring to the table shoots for only a 4 percent cut in pollution.

Furthermore, the statement does not commit to providing international financing for adaptation, mitigation and forest protection, a necessary component of getting agreement from developing nations, and a major roadblock in negotiations thus far.

Having gotten the numbers wrong, the money wrong, and even the date wrong, the President has a great deal of work to do if the US is not to become a dead weight causing the negotiations to fail. We can't change the science, so the President is going to have to change the politics. He needs to invest his political energy in a public campaign for strong climate policy.”