

# Polluters Attack Americans' Clean Air on Senate and House Votes

## Special Interests Collide in Senate, While Big Oil Wields Firm Grip in House

Get more at Joe [Mendelson's blog post here](#).

April 6, 2011 (Washington, DC) – Today's Senate vote on four different amendments attempting to rollback Clean Air Act authority that directs the EPA to address carbon pollution failed. The votes exposed confusion and fracturing amongst the various polluters and special corporate interests who supported each amendment. On the other side of Capitol Hill, the full House will soon take up Rep. Fred Upton's (R-MI) legislation, HR 910. House passage of Mr. Upton's bill rolling back the Clean Air Act is widely expected.

"The process of trying to create polluter loopholes in the Clean Air Act was exposed as a political mess in Congress," said [Joe Mendelson](#), NWF global warming policy director. "In the Senate it took four different attempts to hijack a bill supporting small businesses to cater to the various and differing polluter interests. All these attempts failed. The House's outright attack on science and public health goes against our nation's values and flies in the face of public opinion."

The four Senate votes each put the spotlight on a separate special interest seeking their own particular polluter loophole:

An amendment offered by Senator Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) (Amendment 183) and supported by the oil industry—because it would allow their refineries to continue to spew unlimited carbon pollution—failed by a vote of 50 to 50 (60 were required for passage).

A separate amendment offered by Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) (Amendment 215), a two-year "stop work" order for the EPA and supported by his home-state coal companies, failed 12 to 88.

Another amendment offered by Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) (Amendment 277) that sought a more nuanced form of a two-year delay to help manufacturers, failed 7 to 93.

Finally, an amendment offered by Senator Baucus (D-MT) (Amendment 236) trying to navigate agricultural interests in how the EPA uses the Clean Air Act failed 7 to 93.

Big Oil wields a tighter grip on the House, where the measure is expected to pass. In his January State of the Union address, President Barack Obama pledged to reject any legislation that attacked protections of Americans' clean water and clean air, and the White House reinforced that pledge in a [statement this week](#) saying it would veto the House bill.

As these special interest measures collided in Congress, the public seems to be looking on with disgust. A recent poll confirms that 77 percent of Americans, including 61 percent of Republicans, believe that “Congress should let the EPA do its job.” Only 18 percent believe that “Congress should block the EPA from updating pollution safeguards.”

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