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## **Senate Gets Cracking on Clean Energy and Climate Change**

### **Will they stand up to fossil fuel lobby and deliver real reform?**

**MONTANA:** Today, after months of tough deliberations, Senator John Kerry (D-MA) and Senator Joe Lieberman (I-CT) released a discussion draft of their major climate and clean-energy legislation. This past February, 11 Montana Business Leaders for Clean Energy, representing over 155 Montana businesses and over 2,500 employees from across the state, visited Montana's Senators to deliver a letter urging Congress to pass strong comprehensive clean-energy and climate legislation this year that would create up to 1.9 million new jobs nationwide, generate numerous economic opportunities for Montana farms and businesses, cut carbon pollution and boost America's competitiveness and energy security.

**Today's release of a draft framework of the bill, coupled with the oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico expected to devastate wildlife, natural resources and an entire regional economy, has Montana leaders urging federal leaders more than ever to swiftly deliver a strong comprehensive national climate and energy policy. A good policy will drive our transition to a clean-energy economy —** with millions of new jobs, less dependence on fossil fuels, more energy independence and an America that finally joins the rest of the world in taking meaningful steps to reduce global warming pollution.

**Climate Solutions has brought together comments on this effort from Montana business, scientific, and agricultural leaders from across the state:**

"Strong federal policy is the starting shot that needs to be fired to begin the race for clean-energy technologies. Industry, utilities, venture capitalists and entrepreneurs are twitching on the starting blocks. We must start this race now and run like hell if we want to catch up with China. Comprehensive policy that puts a price on carbon removes the uncertainty that is currently holding up investments in clean-energy technologies. A stable new clean-energy economy and the new jobs it can support depend on the passage of good legislation."

--- Diane Yarus, President, Airworks, Kalispell, Montana

"During the previous two decades the United States proved to be the greatest part of the problem in addressing global climate change. We now owe it to the world and future generations that we become a major part of the solution by assuming the leadership role expected of us. The need for immediate and forceful action cannot be overstated if we are to have any chance of combating the relentless advance of greenhouse gas warming."

--- Eric Grimsrud, recently retired atmospheric scientist, Kalispell, MT.

"One of the best things Americans can do to save money and create jobs is to make their homes and businesses more efficient. But we need strong climate and energy policies including a price on carbon and incentives for energy efficiency and renewable energy to send the right market signals so these investments can happen on a larger scale. We're counting on this bill to provide those things."

--- Pete Strom, CEO, Powerhouse, Inc., Bozeman, Montana

"Farmers are already being affected from global warming. We need the right clean-energy policies to help farmers, businesses and consumers in Montana become more self-sufficient and less dependent on foreign oil. Farmers have a great deal to gain from investments in renewable energy and participation in a local food system that conserves energy. A comprehensive approach to addressing our energy and climate future with benefits to consumers and agriculture is essential if we want to move in the right direction."

--- Ron de Yong, Director, Montana Department of Agriculture, Helena, Montana

"Congress's bipartisan approach to our new energy future represents the best of America. We'll seize the initiative on our energy and security problems by using American economics and American know-how to help us stabilize energy prices, reduce the funding sources for terrorists, create millions of good jobs and clean up the air."

---Steve Corrick, Prudential Montana Real Estate, Missoula, Montana

"Institutions like our hospital use a lot of energy. We have already begun to make the efficiency investments necessary to help us save a quarter of a million dollars per year. Comprehensive policies for energy and climate will allow us to continue to make these investments and protect our environment so we can keep our state and community a healthy place to live."

--- Beth Schenk, St. Patrick's Hospital, Missoula, Montana

**Phone interviews available.**

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