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Kerry, Lieberman Unveil Energy and Climate Draft

Washington, DC: The Sierra Club has signed on to a statement of 21 groups regarding the unveiling of the American Power Act today which can be found at: <http://www.cleanenergyworks.us/press/05-12-10-climate-bill.html>

In the addition, the Sierra Club issues the following statement from Michael Brune, Executive Director:

"Last month's West Virginia coal mine tragedy and the oil disaster currently unfolding highlight the desperate need for a new clean energy economy that ends our self-destructive addiction to dirty energy. We need to move away from dangerous and deadly energy sources towards greater efficiency and cleaner energy. We join with our colleagues in saying that every day the Senate fails to pass clean energy and climate policy, we put our economy, our national security and our environment at risk. Now is the time to put America back in control of our energy future with comprehensive clean energy and climate legislation. It's time to finish what we started.

"If the proposal introduced today by Senators Kerry and Lieberman stays true to its goals, it can serve as a foundation on which we can build an America free from oil dependence, with millions of new clean energy manufacturing, construction and service jobs here at home, less wasted energy, and less of the carbon pollution that is threatening our economy, our health and our climate.

"But this proposal will only serve as a solid foundation if the Senate both improves and completes it.

"We are pleased that this draft allows EPA to move forward with performance standards for existing power plants including coal, but we are disappointed that the bill still waives some key safeguards from the Clean Air Act. And we are pleased that revenue from diesel credits will be directed toward planning that will reduce global warming pollution from transportation and provides guidance on additional spending for the cleaner and more efficient transportation options that will begin to wean America off oil.

"However, we regret that bitter opposition from the dirty energy sources of the past like coal, oil and nuclear has watered down this proposal in order to unduly subsidize energy technologies which already receive an unfair public bailout. The proposal must do more to acknowledge the need for America to serve as a world leader in protecting forests and helping the world prepare for climate disruption.

"Furthermore, this is no substitute for a moratorium on off-shore drilling -- which is the only way that we can ensure that the kind of disaster we are experiencing in the Gulf does not happen again. We expect much more action from our leaders to help America break its addiction to oil as quickly as possible.

"We are hopeful that solutions to these problems can be found. We ask the Senate and President Obama to work with the bill's sponsors to craft a strong final bill, drawing on the best features of other proposals by other Senators, and take it to the floor for consideration by the full Senate in the coming weeks."

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