

Statement from 1Sky Campaign Director Gillian Caldwell on the introduction of the American Power Act

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1Sky Campaign Director Gillian Caldwell issued the following statement today in reaction to the release of the Senate climate and energy bill:

“The American Power Act released by Senators John Kerry and Joe Lieberman today reflects their dedication to delivering critically needed climate and energy policy. With the true cost of our addiction to fossil fuel now appallingly visible in the Gulf of Mexico, it is absolutely critical that we put a price on carbon. Without a price, the clean energy economy will never get the boost it needs to demonstrate its ability to compete against dirty and dwindling fossil fuel resources. A strong bill could create millions of new domestic jobs and begin to change the currently disastrous trajectory of our planet’s climate. Every day that we don’t pass strong, comprehensive climate and energy legislation, we put our economy, our security, and our environment at greater risk.

At the same time, this bill must be improved to represent a critically needed step in the right direction.

1Sky has been working with allies for a year to defend the Clean Air Act and preserve the Obama administration’s authority to regulate dirty coal plants -- America’s largest source of carbon pollution. Although this bill acknowledges the need to set Clean Air Act regulations for old plants as well as strong performance standards for new plants, it must be strengthened to ensure a swift transition away from dirty coal plants that pose such a dangerous threat to our health and climate.

The bill does not go far enough to protect our coasts from the ravages of offshore drilling, so evident in the major environmental catastrophe unfolding on the Gulf coast; and contains provisions that will preempt strong existing state laws that crack down on carbon emissions. Meanwhile, though we know that energy efficiency is one of the best ways to build the clean energy economy, the bill does not do enough to advance energy efficiency efforts, leaving jobs, real pollution reductions, and cost savings on the table.

Additionally, we are concerned that the bill will give a blank check to unsafe and poorly planned expansions of nuclear power plants at the expense of renewable energy solutions, and that it lacks adequate investments in international action to tackle climate change.

The truth of the matter is that -- with a few notable exceptions -- we do not have a Senate that is prepared to deliver the change our country desperately needs. Our elected representatives are too beholden to industrial interests and too cowed by the looming prospects of their midterm election battles. Now more than ever, we call on President Obama to exert fierce leadership to deliver a meaningful comprehensive climate and energy bill. He campaigned on a promise to deliver results for us and future generations, and we simply will not get where we need to go without his leadership.

The 1Sky campaign, with more than 600 allied organizations nationwide, will redouble our efforts to urge President Obama, Majority Leader Reid, and our champions in the Senate and beyond to work to finalize and pass a bill this year that can deliver on the promise of a truly clean energy future and a stabilized climate for us and our children.”

1Sky is a collaborative national campaign for strong federal action to tackle global climate change and invest in building the clean energy economy of the future. As one of the largest national campaigns in the country, 1Sky combines the force of 600 allied

organizations, 199,000 committed climate advocates, 3,900 volunteer Climate Precinct Captains covering more than 390 congressional districts in 50 states, and a team of 37 including 23 organizers in 21 states working to mobilize constituent support.

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