

Regulating Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Date: March 10, 2011
To: Michigan's Congressional Delegation
From: Michigan College, University, Agency and NGO Researchers
RE: Clean Air Act and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

As scientists, researchers, and concerned citizens of the great state of Michigan, we are writing to urge all members of our delegation to stand up for clean air, clean water and the future of Michigan's economy. We strongly urge you to reject any measure that would block or delay the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency from protecting the people of Michigan from air pollution and human caused climate change, both of which put public health, agriculture, the environment and our economy at risk.

As you know, the Clean Air Act requires that EPA works to reduce smog and soot pollution, air toxics, and global warming pollution that together cost the people of Michigan and America billions of dollars in health care and other costs. At the same time, these investments in public health and the environment generate tremendous economic investments in environmental and clean energy technologies and create thousands of good-paying manufacturing jobs, including in Michigan's recovering automotive sector. It is no longer credible or wise to argue that we must sacrifice public health or Michigan's environment to save jobs. Indeed, a recent study by the Public Economy Research Institute projects that new clean air rules would create more than 62,300 construction, installation and professional jobs in Michigan over the next five years.

We also note that the EPA's rules to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from new vehicles were welcomed by the automotive industry, and will save consumers millions of dollars in gas costs, reduce oil consumption and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 960 million metric tons. These rules are also expected to help spur innovation in new automotive technologies that will provide clear benefits for improving the competitiveness of Michigan's auto industry and its workers. Clearly, the agency can and should move forward in a thoughtful and effective way to address one of the most pressing issues of our time.

Many of us wrote to you in 2009, urging you to support strong federal policies to spur rapid and deep reductions in greenhouse gas pollution. This request is no less urgent today, and scientific evidence for human-caused climate change and its associated impacts has only become stronger since 2009. The fact that concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are accumulating in the atmosphere due to fossil fuel combustion and are raising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns is now essentially irrefutable.¹ It is time to accept the best of our science and use it to our advantage. We ignore this valuable information at great risk.

Federal policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas buildup in the atmosphere provide opportunities to protect Michigan's valuable natural resources and stimulate our economy. Importantly, we believe that the benefits to Michigan will likely far exceed the costs. Michigan has been at the forefront of developing a clean energy economy, building on the tremendous success of our manufacturing heritage. For example, Michigan has approximately 6,300 people employed in the solar industry, and the state

¹Anderegg WRL, Prall JW, Harold J, Schneider SH. 2010. Expert credibility in climate change. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences: June 21, 2010, doi: 10.1073/pnas.1003187107

boasts one of the nation's largest 2 solar components manufacturers. Dow Chemical Company recently announced that the company plans to invest more than \$1 billion in its wind, solar, and advanced-battery manufacturing operations, creating more than 6,900 new jobs.

Michigan universities are already partnering with major industries and suppliers, as well as Silicon valley funded start-ups, to deliver next generation vehicles and fuels technologies, while we put idled manufacturing capacity to work building components for wind turbines. Sound, scientifically based federal policies will accelerate this transition by providing regulatory certainty and a friendly investment environment for new technologies. Michigan has positioned itself well to take advantage of the many opportunities presented by these policies, but that potential is limited if we do nothing to encourage a transition to cleaner energy.

Our state and nation face serious economic, social, and ecological impacts from global warming. If climate change continues on its present course, not only will we miss out on the new economic opportunities outlined above, but two of Michigan's biggest industries, agriculture and tourism, could suffer due to reduced agricultural production and increased costs for farmers, and warmer temperatures that threaten favored recreational fishing and birding activities and winter recreation. Additionally, climate change could seriously impact water quantity and quality in the Great Lakes, leading to greater conflicts over water resources in the region.

In short, we ask that you allow the scientists and professionals at EPA to do their job and to continue to build on the decades of environmental and economic successes that have been the hallmark of America's clean air policy. We have the strongest and most dynamic economy on earth and we've done it while becoming a leader in the development and manufacture environmental technologies, while simultaneously achieving dramatic improvements in air quality and public health. Sensible clean air regulations, derived from constructive bi-partisan legislative action, were critical to that success. We, and Michigan, simply cannot afford to abandon that progress now.

Sincerely,



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