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ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE

finding the ways that work

Fred Krupp · President

May 3, 2006

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
United States Senate
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
United States Senate
513 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Introduction of the Clean Air Planning Act of 2006

Dear Senators Alexander and Carper,

I am writing to express Environmental Defense's support for the Clean Air Planning Act of 2006, which you are introducing today. Your leadership on this farsighted legislation sets a course that, if enacted, would deliver public health benefits and global warming gas reductions in a cost effective manner. Your bill points the way to how Congress should approach environmental challenges – high standards for protecting, public health, the environment and the economy.

The Clean Air Planning Act would reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in the electric utility sector, an important first step to preventing the most damaging consequences of climate change. The Clean Air Planning Act reduces the cost of carbon management by allowing American farmers to play a role in providing low cost carbon offsets. The adverse impacts of global warming are all around us; hardly a week passes without more scientific evidence demonstrating that we need to act now.

The Clean Air Planning Act provides emissions reductions of nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide that go beyond those provided under EPA's Clean Air Interstate Rule. These additional reductions translate into lives saved. In contrast to Clear Skies, this bill does not weaken the vital human health and environmental protections under the CAA.

Finally, the Clean Air Planning Act provides the only appropriate manner of reducing mercury, a highly toxic heavy metal that can cause brain damage and learning disabilities in fetuses and children. While cap-and-trade programs provide an effective way to lower control costs for many pollutants they are not appropriate for locally deposited air toxics such as mercury. Recognizing this, Senators Alexander and Carper's legislation calls for a 90% reduction in mercury from each facility.

Environmental Defense commends you on your leadership in cleaning up the nation's air and avoiding dangerous climate change. We look forward to working with you and your staff in these endeavors.

Yours truly,

