



# Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

May 18, 2007

Dear Mr. President:

We are deeply concerned about reports that the United States is seeking to weaken a proposed G-8 declaration regarding global climate change. We are writing to urge you to reverse course and strengthen the G-8 declaration. The United States must no longer delay action to address this major threat.

According to press reports, Administration officials are seeking to strike a pledge to limit the global temperature rise during this century to 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit, as well as an agreement to reduce worldwide greenhouse gas emissions to 50% below 1990 levels by 2050.<sup>1</sup>

We have also learned that the Administration officials may be trying to delete sections of the declaration that call on the industrialized world to modify activities linked to recent warming and to delete one of the document's opening phrases, which highlights the urgency of the necessary actions. This is a disappointing retreat after finally acknowledging the urgency of the issue just last month.

The scientific consensus tells us that it is too late to avoid some warming, but we may still have time to prevent dangerous warming. Preventing the global average temperature from rising more than 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit in comparison to pre-industrial levels must be a top priority. Scientific studies show that a 3.6 degree increase in global temperature could result in the extinction of nearly 30% of all living species, bleaching of much of the world's coral, increased risk of the wider spread of diseases like malaria, more damage from floods and storms, and increased drought in already dry regions.<sup>2</sup> To prevent this from occurring, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently suggested reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% to 85% below 2000 levels would be necessary.<sup>3</sup>

The G8 Summit should be an opportunity to galvanize international support for addressing this looming threat, not an opportunity to prevent and undermine international action. The leaders of the world's largest economies must let the rest of the world know

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Aims to Weaken G-8 Climate Change Statement, Washington Post (May 13, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, 13 (April 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2007: Mitigation of Climate Change*, 23 (May 7, 2007).

that they are serious about addressing the threat posed by global warming and are committed to meaningful action to reduce global warming pollution.

U.S. leadership is critical to tackling this global threat. Congress is now preparing to do its part. Support is growing for aggressive legislation to cap global warming pollution and cut it dramatically over the coming decades. But we need an Executive Branch that engages the rest of the world to solve this problem rather than stubbornly ignoring it.

Without strong leadership from our nation's federal government, we will fall behind our economic competitors in the development of clean energy technologies and miss the economic opportunities to provide these technologies to world markets. We urge you to embrace these opportunities for economic growth and aggressive action, and to demonstrate America's commitment to leading the fight against global warming by producing a strong G-8 declaration.

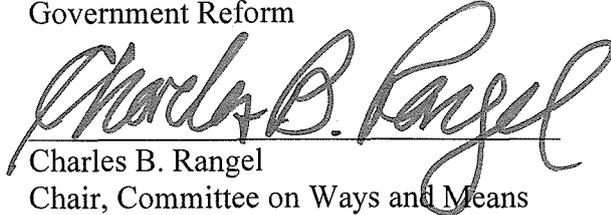
Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman  
Chair, Committee on Oversight and  
Government Reform



Tom Lantos  
Chair, Committee on Foreign Affairs



Charles B. Rangel  
Chair, Committee on Ways and Means



George Miller  
Chair, Committee on Education and  
Labor



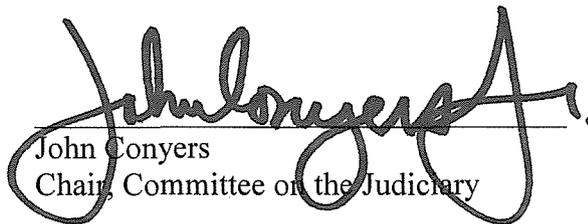
Bart Gordon  
Chair, Committee on Science and  
Technology



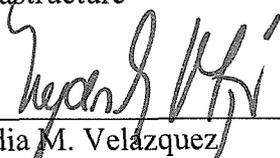
Barney Frank  
Chair, Committee on Financial Services



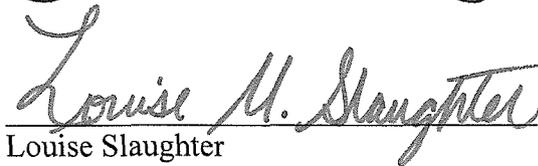
James L. Oberstar  
Chair, Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure



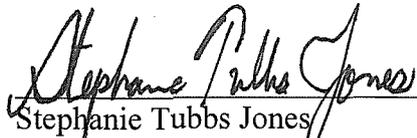
John Conyers  
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary



Nydia M. Velázquez  
Chair, Committee on Small Business



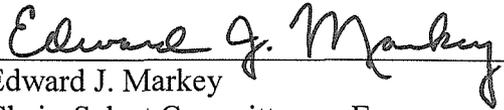
Louise Slaughter  
Chair, Committee on Rules



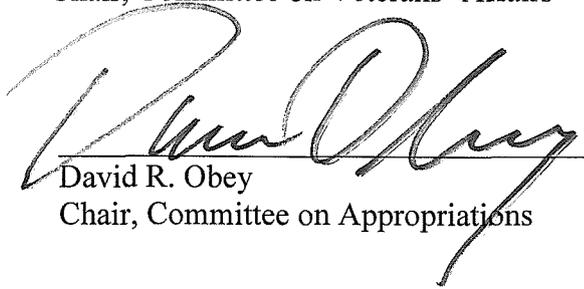
Stephanie Tubbs Jones  
Chair, Committee on Standards of  
Official Conduct



Bob Filner  
Chair, Committee on Veterans' Affairs



Edward J. Markey  
Chair, Select Committee on Energy  
Independence and Global Warming



David R. Obey  
Chair, Committee on Appropriations



John M. Spratt  
Chair, Committee on the Budget