

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 5, 2008

President-Elect Barack Obama  
451 6th St NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. President-elect:

We were so heartened when both you and Senator McCain said during the Presidential campaign that you would support California's request for a waiver under the Clean Air Act to begin addressing global warming pollution from motor vehicles. We urge that under your leadership the next Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) move expeditiously to review California's request and address it pursuant to the requirements of the Clean Air Act. We are confident that the waiver would then be granted, as the law provides, and we would be honored to stand by your side to celebrate this major step forward for the environment and for our economy.

We know you appreciate why the California waiver is so important. When it comes to the challenge of global warming, time is not on our side. Every day that we delay action makes it harder to achieve the cuts in pollution that are needed to avoid the most dangerous effects of global warming. The time to start is now.

Granting California's request for waiver authority under section 209 of the Clean Air Act will in turn allow all other states to adopt the same program under section 177 of the Act. Fourteen other states have adopted California's standards, or are in the process of adopting them. Another four are moving toward adopting the California standards. All together, those 19 states represent more than 152,000,000 Americans – a majority of the U.S. population.

Granting California's waiver request would have an impact on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions almost immediately. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) found that California's GHG standards would reduce greenhouse gas emissions beyond the levels anticipated under the federal fuel economy standards enacted last December in the landmark Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA). The CARB study concluded that if adopted nationwide, California's greenhouse gas standards would prevent 36 percent more greenhouse gas pollution between 2009 and 2016 than would be prevented by the federal fuel economy rules currently proposed pursuant to EISA. Moreover, in addition to carbon dioxide, California standards would include other greenhouse gases that are not addressed by fuel economy rules.

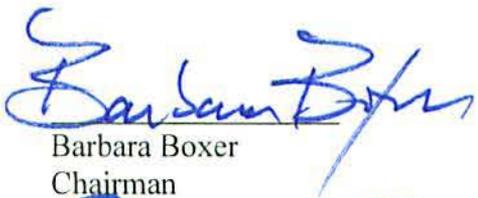
We recognize that the U.S. automobile industry is facing extraordinary challenges today. Congress is working to provide the appropriate assistance for the auto industry in meeting these challenges. However, we are also convinced that it is vital to ensure that the car companies will work toward significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. If the Administrator of the EPA granted the waiver pursuant to California's request, we would be able to achieve that goal.

Giving a green light to the California vehicle standards will bring critical economic benefits as well, by reducing oil consumption, reducing our dependence on imported oil, and spurring innovations and technological advances in energy efficiency and clean energy, which will create good jobs here at home. Granting the waiver will also send a powerful signal to the world that the United States is ready to be the leader in the global fight against climate change.

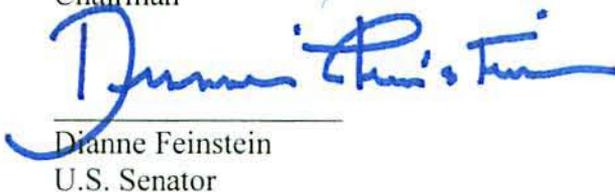
The Bush Administration's denial of the California waiver was unsupported by the law or science. EPA's own legal experts advised Administrator Johnson that his denial of the waiver would almost certainly be overturned by the courts. That case is currently working its way through the courts, but the nation, and the planet, cannot afford to wait.

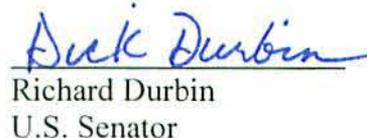
The California waiver will not by itself solve the challenge of global warming. But by moving quickly to assure that EPA reconsiders California's waiver request, you have the opportunity to begin reducing global warming pollution, to move the nation away from our dependence on imported oil, and to restore American leadership on the issue of global warming.

Sincerely,

  
Barbara Boxer  
Chairman

  
Maria Cantwell  
U.S. Senator

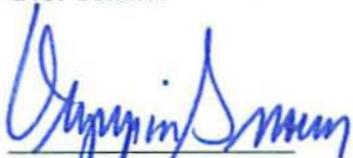
  
Dianne Feinstein  
U.S. Senator

  
Richard Durbin  
U.S. Senator

  
Benjamin Cardin  
U.S. Senator

  
Frank Lautenberg  
U.S. Senator

  
Robert Menendez  
U.S. Senator

  
Olympia Snowe  
U.S. Senator

  
Joseph Lieberman  
U.S. Senator

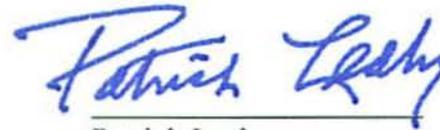
  
Christopher Dodd  
U.S. Senator

  
Bernard Sanders  
U.S. Senator

  
Sheldon Whitehouse  
U.S. Senator

  
Charles Schumer  
U.S. Senator

  
Bill Nelson  
U.S. Senator

  
Patrick Leahy  
U.S. Senator