



International Fund for China's Environment

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Senator Jim Webb
7309 Arlington Blvd
Suite 316
Falls Church, VA 22042

Dear Senator Webb,

In the question and answer session with Mr. Stern during the hearing on Pathways to a "Green" Global Economic Recovery on May 19, 2009 you indicated that for the United States to take a leading role in the battle against climate change that China must make a pledge to set target goals. We respectfully disagree with your comments. There are four points we would like to address. First, United States industrial development was based on fossil fuels that lead it to have by far the largest historical carbon footprint. Secondly, US per capita emissions are still 5 times that of the People's Republic of China at present. Next, China has made great strides in trying to develop clean energy and reduce the emissions. Finally, not only the Kyoto Protocols but also the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) stated that developing countries were not required to put caps on emissions at this stage.

The United States industrial revolution that has made it the most advanced country in the world was based on the same fossil fuels that China is using to industrialize today. Since the mid-1800s the United States has been responsible for 29% of the world's carbon emissions at 328 billion metric tons, more than three times China's 93 billion metric tons in the same timeframe. If the US wants to force China to not follow in their footsteps they should offer a viable alternative that would not impede its development.

Despite China passing the US in total emissions, the fact that China's population is over 1.3 billion means that their per capita carbon output is 1/5th that of America's. It is impossible to measure carbon emissions in finite terms without considering population or per capita GDP. With one of the highest standards of living in the world the US stands in stark contrast to China which still has 300-400 million people living in poverty (a number larger than the entire US population).

As the US Congress is debating the clean energy and climate bills, the Chinese have taken concrete actions towards developing low-carbon economy. China ranked second in the world in 2007 in terms of the absolute dollar amount invested in renewable energy, just behind Germany. One in 10 Chinese households is using solar thermal water heaters. The Chinese government also set up a target to reduce energy intensity by 20 percent of 2005 levels by 2010 and is progressing well to reach the target. China has fuel economy standards that translate to 36.7 miles per gallon, comparing to the U.S. standard still at 27.5 MPG.

The UNFCCC signed by the United States in June 1992 and ratified by the Senate in November of that year stated that developing countries were exempt from having to set emissions goals and cuts. In the Road Map developed in Bali last year, all parties agreed that both developed and developing have common but different responsibilities in reducing the global emissions. Therefore, there are no legal and technical basis to tie US emission control policy with what is going on in China.

However, as the largest developed and developing countries in the world, it is important that US and China work together to control the climate. We are pleased to see recent MOU signed between US and China to enhance cooperation on climate change, energy and the environment. We believe the joint efforts in advancing clean energy and efficiency technologies could benefit to both countries. We hope to hear more positive comments in the following clean energy and climate bill debates, especially with regard to China.

Thank you!

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