

Month, XX, 2008

Dear Senator Boxer,

Under your leadership, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee took the first steps toward addressing the challenge of climate change late last year by passing the America's Climate Security Act (S.2191, Lieberman-Warner). How best to address climate change is an important debate that I am glad to see move forward, and I welcome the opportunity to weigh in on this legislation.

I am writing to encourage you to consider additional provisions that would enable our state and municipal governments to reduce the impact of climate change in the transportation sector. The transportation sector emits a third of America's carbon dioxide (CO₂), the primary greenhouse gas, making it the nation's second largest emissions source. Reducing CO₂ in the transportation sector is therefore integral to a successful climate change policy.

The Lieberman-Warner legislation already contains two strategies to reduce transportation sector emissions: helping American auto manufacturers to build more efficient vehicles and spurring the production of low-carbon alternative fuels. However, we must go further to achieve the CO₂ reductions that science shows are necessary. The Energy Information Administration estimates that driving rates, measured in vehicle-miles traveled (VMT), will double nationwide by 2030. This projected growth in driving will wipe out the combined CO₂ reductions of higher CAFE standards passed in last year's energy bill and low carbon fuel standards currently under consideration.

To avoid this scenario, America's Climate Security Act should incentivize transportation alternatives and encourage more efficient land use patterns that allow more people to take public transportation, use intercity passenger rail, bike, or walk. Several recent studies show that such policies can achieve significant transportation sector CO₂ reductions.

Municipalities are often best positioned to implement such policies, due to the local planning and development responsibility. By making strategic, coordinated investments, municipalities can build communities that have vibrant town centers, are well connected to public transportation, enable walking and bicycling, and expand local economic development opportunities. State governments can also play a critical role by leveraging existing state investments to support these local goals.

Provisions that would support municipal activities to reduce transportation sector CO₂ emissions would help us to meet the challenge of climate change by investing in our states and communities, and would make America's Climate Security Act a stronger, more comprehensive bill.

Sincerely,