

June 7, 2010

Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Leader,

We, the undersigned college and university presidents, request your leadership in adopting climate and energy legislation this year, with full assurance of our active engagement in this effort. Across the country, colleges and universities are meeting the challenges of climate change by working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and teaching our graduates to do the same.

We believe the time has come to put a price on carbon to help our nation begin to shift to clean energy. The Deepwater Horizon disaster, a national tragedy of as yet unknown dimensions, will require years to repair the damage to our environment and economy. However, with your leadership in making climate and energy legislation one of the Senate's top priorities, history can mark 2010 as the turning point to a more sustainable future for America.

As you know, the Gulf disaster is prompting many Americans to think twice about how we produce and use energy. The daily reports are grim reminders that continued reliance on "cheap" fossil fuels costs our nation dearly. The cost to the nation of this addiction entails more than the repair of recurrent disasters. In addition, more and more Americans have deep and rising concern about our heavy reliance on foreign oil, which drains \$1 billion a day from our economy and puts our security at risk. We foresee a national demand for action as the majority of Americans gain an understanding of these realities.

Putting a price carbon is the best way to nurture alternative technologies, create millions of new clean energy jobs, and assure U.S. competitiveness and security in an increasingly interdependent global society of nations. We realize Congress faces many tough choices and tradeoffs in crafting climate and energy legislation. But we are confident that with your strong leadership, Congress can pass and the President can sign a balanced, strong and fair bill that puts a price on carbon.

For our part, we pledge to work to elevate the national dialogue about how energy, the environment and our economy interrelate and to do all we can to prepare our graduates to thrive as the nation transitions to a clean energy economy. For additional information, please contact Tony Cortese, President of Second Nature, at acortese@secondnature.org.

Sincerely,

Esther Barazzone, President, Chatham University (PA)
Christopher R.L. Blake, President, Mount Mercy College (IA)
Donald N. Burton, President, Dunlap-Stone University (AZ)

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