

# **U.S. Takes Worldwide Lead in Regulating & Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions With Historic Senate Vote on June 10, 2010**

**By Rosalind Peterson  
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**On June 10, 2010, in a historic U.S. Senate vote, fifty three Senators (53-47), upheld the right of the EPA to regulate and reduce all greenhouse gas emissions. This vote also upheld a recent decision by the U.S. Supreme Court on April 2, 2007, which allowed the EPA to regulate and reduce all greenhouse gases (1).**

This vote, supported by the Obama administration, sets an example for the entire world to follow and demonstrates that the United States will be leading the world in regulating and reducing greenhouse gases, this year, unless this vote is undermined by the passage of a new senate climate/energy bill. The June 10<sup>th</sup> senate vote renders obsolete the Kerry/Lieberman Climate/Energy Draft Legislation or other climate/energy Senate legislation, to be introduced this fall, because the EPA can start today regulating and reducing all greenhouse gas emissions to protect the environment.

Polluters may now be fined by the EPA for not curbing greenhouse gases and the fines can be used to fund and support clean energy alternatives and new pollution reduction technology for polluting industries.

Senator Barbara Boxer deserves tremendous credit for this historical vote and in taking action to lead the nation in reducing greenhouse gases in 2010. And she sets an example, along with President Obama, for the entire world, on how to reduce greenhouse gas and other pollution emissions. We are encouraging Senator Boxer to oppose any new climate/energy legislation which would undermine the EPA's ability to regulate and reduce greenhouse gases today or undermine the U.S. Clean Air and Water Acts.

**There are now serious threats to the EPA immediately regulating and reducing greenhouse gas emission. In the Senate Vote on June 10<sup>th</sup>, six Democratic Senators voted to stop the EPA from regulating any greenhouse gases: Senators Rockefeller, Lincoln, Ben Nelson, Landrieu, Bayh, and Pryor. Most of these democratic senators are working to stop the EPA from regulating most greenhouse gases by watering down or putting into proposed climate and energy draft bills wording that would undermine the EPA. Senator Rockefeller introduced U.S. Senate Bill S3072 which would delay any EPA regulations reductions for at least two years (2).**

**Senator Reid will introduce legislation this fall that will benefit Halliburton and the natural gas industry (while undermining the clean water act), according to a press conference he held on July 22, 2010 on upcoming energy legislation. Large trucks will be converted, at considerable expense, from using diesel fuel to natural gas. Hydraulic Fracking (using water, sand, and highly toxic chemicals that pollute groundwater and wells), will increase, with more natural gas drilling, destroying the water supplies in many regions of the United States (10-11).**

**If Senator Reid wanted to put people to work he would introduce legislation that would expand rail transportation for goods and services. High speed rail transportation would move people across the U.S. faster and also would be less polluting. Trucks could be hauled by rail cars which would move them across the country using less energy. There would also be less maintenance needed for highways as trucks cause more damage than automobiles.**

Senator Dorgan's presentation regarding the U.S. Senate climate/energy legislation (which was recorded by C-SPAN2), should be viewed by everyone as it addresses the destructive nature of the "Cap & Trade" schemes built into U.S. House Bill H.R. 2454, that passed in 2009, and the proposed climate/energy bills in the U.S. Senate (3). It should be noted that offsets in both bills will be either given away free or they can be purchased by polluting corporations to allow them to continue to pollute at current, or ever-increasing levels, over the next seven years before any greenhouse gas emission reductions are required. Senator Dorgan was right when he stated in his Senate presentation: "It Makes No Sense to Me!"

The U.S. House Bill Climate/Energy Bill (4 Versions) H.R. 2454 are online and should be reviewed as they will be combined in "Conference" with any U.S. Senate Climate/Energy Bills that are passed in 2010. Since the Climate Bill passed the U.S. House it has gone to the Senate. (Keep in mind that debate may be taking place on a companion bill in the Senate, rather than on this particular bill.) U.S. H.R. 2454 allows no Reductions in Greenhouse Gases until 2017, and then only a 20% reduction of 2005 emissions levels. The new climate/energy legislation will allow polluters to purchase offsets (or receive them free), so that they can keep polluting, at current or higher levels, for many years without any reductions. The House Bill and the new proposed Senate Bill will only move us backwards.

The new climate/energy bill also revitalizes the highly polluting nuclear power industry. It takes fossil fuels for uranium mining which pollutes rivers and streams. Fossil fuels are used all the way through the highly intensive and polluting enrichment processes that also pollutes our environment. And there is no place to safely store the waste from all of our current plants. These plants need lots of cold water to cool the reactors-the hot water being returned to harm rivers, streams or the ocean.

The insurance companies won't insure nuclear power plants because of so many problems...thus, the House and Senate Bills are designed to have U.S. taxpayers pay (under a carbon tax), for nuclear loan guarantees and other expenses. Thus, instead of funding alternative energy that is less polluting the new climate/energy bills will embrace not only nuclear but other polluting industries like coal, gas, and oil.

The Union of Concerned Scientist's June 10, 2010, report "Nuclear Power Subsidies Will shift Financial Risks to Taxpayers" noted the following: "...The nuclear power industry is seeking tens of billions (about \$147 Billion), in new subsidies and other incentives in federal climate and energy legislation that would shift massive construction, financing, operating and regulatory costs and risks from the industry and its financial backers to U.S. taxpayers. Congress should reject these overly generous subsidies to this mature industry whose history of skyrocketing costs and construction overruns already has resulted in two costly bailouts by taxpayers and captive ratepayers—once in the 1970s and 1980s when utilities cancelled or abandoned more than 100 plants, and again in the 1990s when plant owners offloaded their "stranded costs..." (5-7)

There will only be a pittance left over for alternative energy when all of these polluting industries are revitalized or funded with our tax dollars. In addition, the buying and selling of offsets allows polluters to continue to pollute at current or ever-increasing levels and places us in the position of doing nothing about greenhouse gas emissions. With the Cap & Trade and bank provisions written into the U.S. House Bill, this gives Wall Street a financial bonanza paid for by our tax dollars.

Many corporations and various groups are asking people to support the Senate climate/energy bill even though the newest draft will not be introduced in the Senate until this fall. Polluting corporations see a financial bonanza waiting for them from our tax dollars without any restrictions on their greenhouse gas emissions.

Our senators should be required to read and release the text of the bill prior to any vote so that the public is informed and can make recommendations to their respective senators. When the public reads about Wall Street and the Banks that will benefit from these Corporate Ponzi Schemes one can bet that they will say: "NO!"

We are being asked, in recent blitz-type television advertising, to support this proposed Senate legislation even though no one has read it? This seems outrageous. We do know the contents of the full text of U.S. House Bill 2454 (4). Thus, any version of the Senate version will have many of those same provisions. Thus, a reading of the House Bill should help in determining a position on the proposed Senate legislation until the text of the Senate bill is released to the public.

On July 19, 2010 Earthjustice wrote: "...We cannot allow this climate bill to be a way for big polluters to get out of Clean Air (or Water) Act controls that protect us from dangerous soot, smog, and air toxics. The health and well-being of the American people is not a bargaining chip and any discussion of such a deadly trade-off must end..."

**The U.S. Senate Vote on June 10<sup>th</sup> was a victory for the people of the United States starts our country on the path of reducing greenhouse gases. The vote demonstrates to the rest of the world that we are serious about starting immediately down this path. Now we have the leverage to pressure other countries into taking this same action...to protect our environment. This was a historic victory for the people, the Earth, and the quality of our lives. The new climate/energy legislation heading for a vote will only move us backwards. End**

For more information: <http://agriculturedefensecoalition.org/> or additional articles about Buying & Selling the Right to Pollute: <http://newswithviews.com/Peterson/rosalind113.htm>

- 1, The U.S. Senate upheld a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court on April 2, 2007: Massachusetts v. EPA, 549 U.S. 497  
<http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/06pdf/05-1120.pdf>
- 2, Democratic Senator Rockefeller Has Introduced Senate Legislation to Delay or Stop the EPA from Regulating and reducing Greenhouse Gases or he is Supporting Other Legislation with the Same Intent. <http://www.govcongresstrack.us//billsearch.xpd> See Listing of Bills  
Senator Rockefeller Introduced Bill to Delay Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions by EPA on March 4, 2010: "To suspend, during the 2-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, any Environmental Protection Agency action under the Clean Air Act with respect to carbon dioxide or methane pursuant to certain proceedings, other than with respect to motor vehicle emissions, and for other purposes."  
U.S. Senate Bill 3072 <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=s111-3072>
- 3, Senator Byron Dorgan's Floor Speech on the Negative consequences of passing a Climate/Energy Bill with Cap & Trade Provisions and Offsets included.  
<http://agriculturedefensecoalition.org/?q=cap-and-trade>
- 4, <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h111-2454>  
Passed U.S. House of Representatives on June 26, 2009.  
The bill now goes on to be voted on in the Senate. Keep in mind that debate may be taking place on a companion bill in the Senate, rather than on this particular bill. [Last Updated: Jun 27, 2010] <http://thomas.loc.gov/>  
**There are 4 versions of Bill Number H.R.2454 for the 111th Congress. Usually, the last item is the most recent. American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009**

5, **Nuclear Power A Resurgence We Can't Afford – Union of Concerned Scientists-August 1, 2009** [http://www.ucsusa.org/nuclear\\_power/nuclear\\_power\\_and\\_global\\_warming/nuclear-power-resurgence.html](http://www.ucsusa.org/nuclear_power/nuclear_power_and_global_warming/nuclear-power-resurgence.html)

6, [Nuclear Power Subsidies Will Shift Financial Risks to Taxpayers](#) June 10, 2010 Report Union of Concerned Scientists:

**“...The nuclear power industry is seeking tens of billions in new subsidies and other incentives in federal climate and energy legislation that would shift massive construction, financing, operating and regulatory costs and risks from the industry and its financial backers to U.S. taxpayers. Congress should reject these overly generous subsidies to this mature industry whose history of skyrocketing costs and construction overruns already has resulted in two costly bailouts by taxpayers and captive ratepayers—once in the 1970s and 1980s when utilities cancelled or abandoned more than 100 plants, and again in the 1990s when plant owners offloaded their "stranded costs...Massive new subsidies will only further mask nuclear power's considerable costs and risks while disadvantaging more cost-effective and less risky carbon reduction measures that can be implemented much more quickly, such as energy efficiency and many renewable energy technologies...”**

7, **Union of Concerned Scientists Backgrounder on Nuclear Power:**  
[http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/nuclear\\_power/nuclear-power-loan-guarantees-backgrounder.pdf](http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/nuclear_power/nuclear-power-loan-guarantees-backgrounder.pdf)

8, **NRDC July 2, 2010 Statement:**

**Tell your senators not to halt the EPA's ability to hold polluters accountable for global warming pollution**

“...Senator Rockefeller (D-WV) has a plan that would undermine the Clean Air Act and block the Environmental Protection Agency from requiring cuts in global warming pollution for the next four years...Senator Rockefeller's proposal would let big polluters off the hook, keep America reliant on old, polluting energy technologies and take away valuable tools that the EPA needs to protect public health...Senator Rockefeller's plan is a step backward when we need to be creating a healthier planet for our children...”

9) **Earthjustice.org July 19, 2010 Statement:**

“...At this moment, Senate leaders are racing to prepare a climate and energy bill for a vote before the August 9, 2010, month long recess. They are hearing loud and clear from big polluters, who are pushing for free passes (offsets or carbon credits) on long-standing controls for air pollutants that make up deadly lung disease-causing, cancer-causing, asthma-causing soot and smog.

They need to hear from you that this sweetener for big polluters would be poisonous for Americans. These are the nasty and lethal air pollutants that inspired Congress to craft the Clean Air Act and for President Nixon to sign it into law 40 years ago this year. Tens of thousands of lives are saved every year because of the pollution controls the law requires, and thousands more emergency room visits are avoided.

We cannot allow this climate bill to be a way for big polluters to get out of Clean Air Act controls that protect us from dangerous soot, smog, and air toxics. The health and well-being of the American people is not a bargaining chip and any discussion of such a deadly trade-off must end...”

- 10, New York Times July 8, 2010 Halliburton & Natural Gas Drilling in the United States:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/cwire/2010/07/08/08climatewire-big-money-drives-up-the-betting-on-the-marce-22075.html>
- 11, Scientific American “What the Frack? Natural Gas from Subterranean Shale Promises U.S. Energy Independence--With Environmental Costs” March 30, 2010  
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=shale-gas-and-hydraulic-fracturing>