

Sent: 6/21/2010 12:42:22 P.M. Central Daylight Time
Subject: Reply from Senator Harkin

June 21, 2010

Ms. S. Allison
Mount Vernon, Iowa 52314-1538

Dear Ms. Allison:

Thank you for sharing your concerns with me regarding global warming and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. I also appreciate your views regarding the authority of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate such emissions. These are very important issues, and I assure you that I have been following these decisions closely.

Society has become increasingly aware of the effects of global warming, as scientists have observed rising average temperatures, accelerated glacial and polar ice melting, and greater occurrences of extreme weather events. It is known that the emissions of greenhouse gases resulting from human activities are driving global warming.

It also is generally accepted that all nations have a shared global responsibility to address this very serious problem. In my view, passing well-crafted legislation that makes strong investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies is the best way to set the pace in the United States, for what must be a global effort to mitigate global warming by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

While legislation is the preferred approach, **it also is important to recognize that EPA has authority to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act (CAA), which has long been the standard for environmental air quality regulations.**

The CAA seeks to protect human health and the environment from air pollutants, and Section 202(a) of the act requires the EPA to create standards for and to regulate such pollutants. While the question of whether the Clean Air Act applies to greenhouse gases has been debated in recent years, the Supreme Court settled that question in a ruling in 2007 which concluded that the EPA must determine whether or not greenhouse gases represent a danger to public health or welfare. More recently in December of 2009, EPA Administrator Lisa

Jackson released a finding that greenhouse gases in the atmosphere do threaten the "public health and welfare of current and future generations." As a consequence of this finding, the EPA is required to formulate a set of proposed regulations for controlling greenhouse gases and to release them for comment, as a first step towards establishing and enforcing such regulations.

While I support the EPA's clear authority to regulate greenhouse gases, I believe the formulation and passage of global warming legislation by Congress is a more effective approach. Such legislation can be structured to balance the impacts of these policies across regions and economic sectors as well as to emphasize the creation of green jobs and economic growth.

I believe this consideration should be central to our national global warming strategy. Therefore, I will continue to work hard with my colleagues in Congress to formulate legislation that simultaneously addresses the problems posed by global warming, invests in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, and leads the way to a new green economy by creating thousands of green energy jobs.

Again, thank you for sharing your thoughts with me on these very important issues, and please do not hesitate to contact me in the future.

Sincerely,

Tom Harkin

United States Senator