

Statement by Rep. James P. Moran  
Step It Up National Day of Climate Act

November 3, 2007

My heartfelt greetings to everyone in attendance. I regret that I am not here with you today to rally for the changes that must be made to protect our future. Other than the war in Iraq, this is the most important issue we should be confronting. I applaud your commitment to join the call for urgent action on climate change and your participation at today's rally. Elected officials need to hear your voice. Without it, things in Congress and in the White House will not change.

Long before *An Inconvenient Truth*, I was a strong proponent of lowering greenhouse gas emissions. As the largest producer of greenhouse gases, the U.S. must take a leadership role at reducing emissions. I am a cosponsor of the most aggressive proposal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the Safe Climate Act (H.R. 1590). This bill sets science-based, national greenhouse gas emission targets with measures to reduce emission through advancing technology in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and cleaner cars. By cutting emissions 2 percent per year beginning in 2011, the Safe Climate Act reduces emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Then, by further cutting emissions by 5 percent per year, by 2050 emissions will be 80 percent lower than 1990 levels. This is the objective most scientists agree is necessary to avert permanent and potentially irreversible global climate change.

I am also one of a handful of members in Congress who support the adoption of a tax on carbon (H.R. 3416) and am a strong proponent of tougher fuel efficiency standards for automobiles and trucks. Unfortunately, the votes may not be there today to secure passage of these bills.

All, however, is not lost. Progress is being made. Late this past summer, the House passed the "New Direction for Energy Independence, National Security and Consumer Protection Act" (H.R. 3221). During its consideration, I worked to support the addition of a renewable energy portfolio provision that requires electric utilities to produce 15 percent of their electricity from clean renewable sources. With this recent House action, Congress has moved one step closer to adopting a comprehensive, environmentally responsible energy bill, and one that will take important steps towards developing our country's vast renewable energy resources.

If this provision and the tougher vehicle fuel efficiency standards in the Senate-passed energy bill become part of a final bill, we have the beginnings of a substantial commitment toward lower greenhouse gas emissions and greater, cleaner energy independence. With enactment of this bill, we will be able to achieve about 40 percent of the greenhouse emissions reductions needed by 2030. That's the equivalent of retiring 300 coal-fired power plants. We will also reduce our dependence on foreign sources of oil by 10 million barrels of oil per day.

I pledge to do all I can to complete work on this important legislation. I ask for your help, which is essential, to convince others in Congress and President Bush that this is the least we can do to save our planet for future generations.

Thank you and Godspeed.