

May 26, 2010

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sanders,

America's dangerous dependence on oil puts our economy and environment at risk. We applaud your leadership in introducing legislation that would cut America's reliance on oil while protecting our pristine beaches, sensitive ecosystems, and coastal communities. The *Clean Coasts and Efficient Cars Act of 2010* is an important contribution to the overall debate on comprehensive clean energy and climate change legislation. The current disaster in the Gulf of Mexico makes it clear that we must cut our reliance on oil and other dangerous sources of energy by spawning a new, clean energy economy in the United States.

This important legislation would take two critical steps. First, it would reestablish important protections along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, as well as parts of the Gulf of Mexico, to avoid increasing the chances of a similar oil spill disaster that would harm the ecosystems, fisheries, and communities in these areas. This is a common sense reaction to the disaster in the Gulf and the inability of BP to quickly stop the spill. More importantly, this legislation would spur American innovation to increase the fuel economy of and cut greenhouse gas emissions from America's cars and light trucks. This is the single biggest step we can take to cutting America's oil dependence, while reducing global warming pollution and saving consumers money at the gas pump. By setting a minimum average fleetwide fuel economy level, your legislation will allow the Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency to continue their important work to set future standards. According to our own analysis, we can reach and exceed the baseline fuel economy levels proposed in your legislation by utilizing improvements to conventional vehicle technology as well as expanded production of advanced vehicles such as battery electric and fuel cell vehicles.

On behalf of our more than 300,000 supporters nationwide, the Union of Concerned Scientists commends your continued leadership on clean energy and environmental protection. We look forward to working with you to advance this legislation and enact comprehensive climate change and clean energy legislation this Congress.

Sincerely,

Kevin Knobloch
President
Union of Concerned Scientists