



Re: Climate Change Legislation S.342 and S. 1151

Dear Senator,

On behalf of our 1.2 million members and activists, I am writing to convey the Natural Resources Defense Council's (NRDC) strong support for S.342, the original version of the Climate Stewardship Act introduced earlier this year by Senators McCain and Lieberman. In particular, we believe the bill's cap and trade regime for carbon pollution offers a pivotal pathway for the urgent effort to reduce global warming pollution from the United States, and would strengthen the international effort to grapple with this immensely serious problem.

We do not, however, support S. 1151, a newly introduced version of this legislation, owing to its large and unjustified new subsidies for the construction and licensing of new nuclear power plants. It is time to focus our resources on catalyzing new domestic and global markets for clean, flexible energy technologies such as wind, solar, bio-fuels, increased efficiency, and coal gasification with carbon capture, which can be deployed more quickly, more cheaply and on a much wider scale than nuclear power. We believe the bill's nuclear subsidies will drain funding from these more effective and cost-competitive carbon-reducing energy technologies. Recent studies by Department of Energy laboratories show that we can meet aggressive targets to reduce America's global warming pollution without increasing the role of nuclear power in our energy mix.

Because of unresolved questions about the nuclear fuel cycle's waste, operating safety, and role in nuclear weapons proliferation, questions that would be exacerbated by significant additional deployment, in our view it would be inappropriate to try to tilt the decision of the market by adding subsidies for nuclear licensing and construction. Indeed, despite more than \$77 billion in federal subsidies for nuclear power over the last 50 years, new nuclear power plants continue to be uneconomic investments. Moreover, nuclear facilities and materials pose special risks as targets for theft and attack by terrorists.

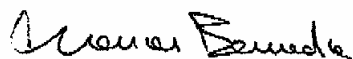
If these serious problems can be remedied, there may be new opportunities for nuclear power in our energy future. However, we feel strongly that any federal investments in this area should be focused on resolving its serious continuing problems, rather than providing subsidies, like those in S.1151, that leave these concerns unaddressed.

As the Energy bill moves to the floor, we urge you to support a global warming amendment that includes a cap and trade program like that in the original Climate Stewardship Act, but does not include controversial and counter-productive subsidies for the construction and licensing of new nuclear power plants. We believe that such

subsidies significantly reduce Senate support for the effort to reduce global warming pollution.

Please feel free to contact me if I or other NRDC staff can provide any additional information or otherwise be of help on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frances Beinecke". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Frances Beinecke  
Executive Director