May 28, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: State Voice Group Comments on Protecting USEPA Authority to Regulate Greenhouse Gases under the Clean Air Act

Dear Senators:

The "State Voice" group is a bipartisan, regionally diverse coalition of lead state environmental officials working together to promote a strong national climate change program in the U.S. The environmental regulators who comprise the State Voice group strongly oppose the proposed Resolution of Disapproval that would prevent the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) from proceeding with implementation of the Endangerment Finding or otherwise using the Clean Air Act (CAA) to control emissions of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs).

We support aggressive federal legislation to combat climate change and build a new clean energy economy on a foundation of a robust local-state-federal partnership. However, even with federal legislation, the CAA will continue to provide an effective and proven framework for achieving national environmental and public health goals, including reducing GHG pollution.

Just last week, President Obama directed USEPA to work with the Department of Transportation to draft new GHG emission standards for passenger cars and trucks through model year 2025, as well as the first-ever standards for heavy duty trucks and commercial vehicles. These standards – based on the effective framework of the CAA – reduce American dependence on foreign and polluting energy, create American jobs and save consumers money, all while mitigating the urgent threat of climate change. If passed, the Resolution of Disapproval could undermine this critical national clean vehicles program and eliminate its many societal benefits.

Over the past four decades, the CAA has delivered tremendous public health and environmental benefits, including significant reductions in lead, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter and other pollutants. We believe that USEPA regulatory oversight of GHG emissions under this statute will deliver similar benefits.

It would be short-sighted for Congress to remove one of the few effective tools the nation has to address our critical energy and environmental challenges, especially in the absence of effective Senate action on comprehensive climate change legislation to provide an alternative framework.

We ask you to ensure that all of the tools to address the tremendous challenge of climate change remain available to our nation. We urge the Senate to reject the Resolution of Disapproval to overrule the greenhouse gas Endangerment Finding or otherwise limit USEPA's authority under the CAA to regulate these pollutants.

Sincerely,

The Members of the State Voice Group

Mary D. Nichols, Chair
California Air Resources Board

Collin O'Mara, Secretary
Delaware DNREC

Douglas P. Scott, Director
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

David Littell, Commissioner
Maine Department of Environmental Protection

Shari T. Wilson, Secretary
Maryland Department of the Environment

Laurie Burt, Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

Rebecca A. Humphries, Director
MI Department of Natural Resources & Environment

Tom Burack, Commissioner
NH Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

Ron Curry, Secretary

New Mexico Environment Department

Pete Grannis, Commissioner

New York Department of Environmental Conservation

Dick Pederson, Director

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Ted Sturdevant, Director

Washington State Department of Ecology

Matthew J. Frank, Secretary

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein

Senator Barbara Boxer

Senator Thomas R. Carper

Senator Ted Kaufman

Senator Richard J. Durbin

Senator Roland W. Burris

Senator Olympia J. Snowe

Senator Susan M. Collins

Senator Barbara A. Mikulski

Senator Benjamin L. Cardin

Senator John F. Kerry

Senator Scott P. Brown

Senator Carl Levin

Senator Debbie Stabenow

Senator Judd Gregg

Senator Jeanne Shaheen

Senator Jeff Bingaman

Senator Tom Udall

Senator Charles E. Schumer

Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand

Senator Ron Wyden

Senator Jeff Merkley

Senator Patty Murray

Senator Maria Cantwell

Senator Herbert H. Kohl

Senator Russ Feingold