

Senator Kerry Calls On Administration to Comply with U.S. Climate Change Law

Supports Lawsuit to Force Compliance with Global Climate Change Research Act

Washington, D.C. -- Given the clear mandate from the American people to change direction, respect the law, replace secrecy with transparency, and act on pressing national concerns such as global climate change, Senator Kerry today reiterated his call for the government to comply with the Global Climate Change Research Act of 1990.

Senator Kerry supports a lawsuit filed today by conservation advocates -- the Center for Biological Diversity, Greenpeace, and Friends of the Earth - calling for the administration to comply with the Act and issue an overdue National Assessment on the impacts of climate change on the United States.

Recognizing that accurate information is vital to the formulation of climate change policy, the 1990 Global Change Research Act required the Climate Change Science Program to prepare a National Assessment of the impacts of climate change on the U.S. every four years. The Assessment is a synthesis of the most up-to-date scientific data on climate change impacts on the U.S. and contains projections for the future. Although an Assessment was due in 2004, the Science Program failed to meet that deadline, with no report being produced since 2000.

Concerned about global warming and the Administration's failure to comply with the Global Change Research Act, Senator Kerry, in conjunction with Senator McCain, requested the United States Government Accounting Office (GAO) to evaluate the Program's compliance with the requirements of the Act. In April 2005, the GAO issued a report concluding that the Program had not met the requirements of the GCRA and was not on track to do so. On August 16, 2006, Senator Kerry submitted a formal request to the Science Program to issue the overdue National Assessment, but was met with silence.

"For too many years, action on global climate change has been stopped dead in its tracks by government foot-dragging, hiding information, and smothering science. Americans are way ahead of where this city has been on taking climate change seriously. In the old Congress they even trotted out the author of Jurassic Park as an expert witness to argue that climate change is fiction. This is Stone Age science," said Senator John Kerry. "It's the right time to push Washington to grapple with this issue. We can't respond to climate change if we can't make the government comply with the laws already on the books. This lawsuit sends an important message not just to follow the Global Change Research Act,

but also to pass legislation imposing mandatory and substantial cuts in our greenhouse gas emissions. Let's get serious."