

May 18, 2009

Dear Representative,

On behalf of The Nature Conservancy, and our chapters around the country, I encourage you to vote to report the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES) to the House following this week's markup in the Energy and Commerce Committee.

This bill would establish an urgently needed framework to build upon our investments in conservation, energy efficiency, and low-carbon technologies by capping and reducing over time the greenhouse gas emissions that are putting at risk our planet's natural heritage and the many people around the world who depend on it for their survival.

Across the world, The Nature Conservancy has protected tens of millions of acres of unique habitat during our half century as a conservation organization. But these investments and many others by countries, states, organizations, local communities, and individuals are placed at risk by new temperature regimes, rising sea-levels, droughts, disappearing snowpack, and changing ocean chemistry.

The American Clean Energy and Security Act would establish U.S. leadership in reducing the emissions that are threatening ecological and human well-being. The bill dedicates 5% of the allowances under the cap to support a program that would conserve tropical forests, countering the strong economic incentives that are driving forest destruction at a rate that is generating more emissions than all the planes, trains, trucks, and automobiles in the world. This investment, combined with robust offset provisions, would create a real chance to reduce forest emissions while engaging developing countries in efforts to reduce emissions. We urge your support for these provisions.

The legislation also provides critically needed dedicated funding to efforts to protect our natural resources here in the U.S. that will be seriously challenged by climate change. We urge your support for these provisions. Equally important, the bill allocates allowance value to protect vulnerable communities in the U.S. and in developing nations that will be essential to prepare for and manage the most difficult consequences of climate change. These provisions will be essential to provide for an equitable response.

As you consider this legislation in committee, we encourage you to give your support to provisions that will improve the bill and support conservation efforts. These include provisions to accelerate the rulemaking process for offsets, ensure that a broad range of conservation activities are eligible to participate in the carbon market and provide supplemental emission reductions, to encourage participation of a broader range of developing countries in the carbon market, and to recognize the role of ecosystem-based approaches in protecting human and natural communities. Finally, the bill's provisions are a useful step toward effective U.S. participation in international climate negotiations.

Thank you for considering our views on these critical issues.

Sincerely,

