



ENVIRONMENTALISTS FOR OBAMA

January 2008

We, the undersigned, who have devoted much of our lives to the cause of conservation and environmental protection, all actively support Barack Obama in his quest for the Democratic nomination.

While it is true that all the leading Democratic candidates have expressed strong and similar environmental platforms, we believe that only Senator Obama has demonstrated the ability to work across the aisle and forge the broad coalitions necessary for real change. In Congress and the Illinois Legislature, Senator Obama has taken on vested interests and built creative coalitions that have achieved major environmental victories. It should come as no surprise that he has received the highest ranking from the League of Conservation Voters of any candidate for president. It is no accident that in Illinois in 2003 he was one of only six State Senators to receive a 100% environmental voting award from the Illinois Environmental Council. Our nation needs a President with the courage and ability to boldly confront climate change and our dependence on fossil fuels.

Two years ago, when few in the U.S. Senate would even say the word CAFE, Senator Obama reached across the aisle and introduced the Fuel Economy Reform Act with Republican Senator Richard Lugar and a dozen other Senators. By working with the environmental community, the United Auto Workers and a host of experts to build a strong coalition, Senator Obama was not only able to propose legislation that both strengthened and reformed fuel economy standards, but he was able to secure the votes of several senators who had never before supported fuel economy mandates. In 2007, for the first time in over 30 years, Congress adopted and the President signed strengthened and reformed fuel economy standards that were virtually identical to the Obama-Lugar legislation.

Barack Obama is also a champion of clean renewable power. As an Illinois state legislator, Senator Obama was the lead Senate sponsor of the renewable energy portfolio standard legislation supported by a strong coalition of environmental and public health organizations and clean

energy businesses. In 2007, Illinois enacted among the very strongest renewable energy standards legislation in the nation – requiring that utilities ramp up their purchases of clean renewable energy to 25% of the electricity supply by 2025. Barack Obama supports a similarly aggressive federal renewable requirement. We believe that as President, he will be uniquely capable of overcoming the political roadblocks that have thwarted adoption of a national RPS to date.

To address the climate crisis, Senator Obama supports an aggressive cap and trade program that harnesses the forces of the market and auctions 100% of the permits to fund energy efficiency, clean technology, and to protect low income Americans from rising energy prices. In addition, Obama has relentlessly pursued measures to reduce our dangerous dependence on oil while ensuring that efforts to promote alternative fuels also achieve our low carbon goals. For example, Senator Obama has led the effort to establish a National Low Carbon Fuels Standard based on the innovative program adopted in the state of California. Knowing that such a program would make many ethanol producers nervous, last year Senator Obama called the ethanol community together and explained his view that ethanol's future depended upon developing low carbon alternatives to today's corn based option.

Recognizing the possibility of opposition from Midwest colleagues, Senator Obama worked with Senator Tom Harkin to introduce the legislation with him. When introducing the legislation, Senator Obama asserted that we must simultaneously pursue our climate change and energy security goals. We applaud Senator Obama's view that a low carbon fuels standard is the most effective way to ensure that all alternative fuels - - including coal based options - - are not allowed into the system unless they too achieve significant carbon reductions. Again, Senator Obama's broad vision and ability to build unusual coalitions has moved an important environmental priority forward

We believe that Obama is telling it as it is when he says that it is not enough to elect a Democrat, but that we need to elect one who can govern by uniting people in a setting where Democrats don't hold all the cards. Climate change is the challenge of our generation. We must have a President with the courage and resourcefulness to unite the nation and face up to this challenge.

His environment and energy program is fully spelled out on his website, www.barackobama.com. We invite all environmentalists and conservationists to join us in supporting Barack Obama, which may well decide the kind of country we leave to our children. To join the effort, please visit <http://enviros.barackobama.com>.

Respectfully Submitted*,

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