



Global Climate Coalition
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August 10, 1993

Dear Journalist:

The White House is continuing to develop the details of its plan to fulfill the President's Earth Day pledge to reduce emissions of "greenhouse gases" to 1990 levels by the year 2000. The exact timing of the Administration's announcement has not been determined, but it is expected within the next two months. The direction that the Administration takes is of critical concern because the burden of action will fall on American businesses.

The climate change issue has evolved considerably from the predictions of cataclysmic "global warming" prevalent in the 1980s. Most climatologists now agree that the computer models used in making apocalyptic predictions were far too simple to be useful in forecasting the future. The scientific debate over the causes and effects of global climate change continues to be vigorous, but there is no consensus that a crisis is in the making.

At the same time, initial studies by organizations ranging from the Congressional Budget Office to DRI/McGraw Hill indicate that there would be staggering economic costs associated with stabilizing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, the fact is that the majority of future greenhouse gas emissions will originate in the developing countries, not in industrialized nations. Authorities estimate the United States' share of global emissions by 2025 will be just 15 percent.

In addition, a new study commissioned by the GCC shows the United States is outpacing the European Community (EC) in setting tough environmental standards and achieving significant environmental improvements. The paper makes it clear that U.S. environmental standards are more stringent than comparable standards in the EC. In the case of greenhouse gases, reports indicate that EC countries (in total) would fall short of stabilizing carbon dioxide emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000. A summary of the study is enclosed; the complete report is available from the Coalition.

It's clear that the timetable for reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000 is a political target rather than an ecological imperative. According to the Administration this would reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 1.4 percent of global emissions. Since most CO₂ emissions are naturally occurring, proposed U.S. action would reduce global emissions by just a small fraction of one percent of worldwide totals. Setting questionable, unrealistic emissions goals whose attainment would be very costly, could seriously burden the fragile national economy.

The better way for the United States to affect global greenhouse gas emissions would be to lead in the research, development and promotion of energy efficient technologies for use here and abroad. This would stimulate economic growth while contributing to a global reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.



As the voice for U.S. business and industry on the climate change issue, the Global Climate Coalition is available to comment on the administration's climate change policies once they are announced, and to provide background analyses on economic costs, U.S. energy efficiency, developments in Europe, and more.

If you would like more information on the status of global climate initiatives or to schedule an interview, please call Don Rheem or Lisa Franklin at (202) 628-3622.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Shlaes". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

John Shlaes
Executive Director

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