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ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515-6115

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August 28, 2006

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The Honorable Ed Whitfield
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Whitfield:

Several times during the July 19 and July 27, 2006, hearings on the "hockey stick" temperature reconstructions, you and Chairman Barton expressed interest in reviewing and understanding the broader range of underlying scientific studies that have led experts such as Ralph Cicerone, President of the National Academy of Sciences, to support the widely held conclusion that global warming is occurring, and that human activity is at least partially responsible. For example, you stated on July 27 that policy makers needed "to understand the quality and the reliability of the science on which we are urged to base public policy that is both sweeping and costly" (Transcript, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations July 27, 2006, hearing, at p.12). At the same hearing, Chairman Barton said:

"This Committee holds a very key role in any policy-making decisions related to climate change. As its chairman, I have an obligation to be cognizant of that and to do everything possible to get a fair record but also get into the details of some of the theories that . . . the recommended policies, are supposedly based upon." (Transcript of Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations July 27, 2006, hearing, at p. 14).

We wholeheartedly agree with the desire to compile a fair and a balanced record on the science of global warming. The testimony provided at the Subcommittee's July hearings began this process, but raises additional questions relating to changes in glaciers, distintegration of Antarctic ice shelves, and a potential rise in sea levels. Therefore, we request that the Subcommittee hold a hearing in September on what changes in ice and glaciers can tell us about global warming.

Many scientists look to ice and glaciers for scientific evidence related to climate change. For example, in its report "Surface Temperature Reconstructions for the last 2,000 Years" (June 2006), the National Academy of Sciences cited ice core studies to support its conclusion that unprecedented global warming is occurring. Analyses of ice core measurements from Antarctica found that current CO2 concentrations are much higher than any time in the last 650,000 years (Siegenthaler, "Stable Carbon Cycle-Climate Relationship During the Late Pleistocene," *Science*, Vol. 310 at 1313 (November 25, 2005)). Climate scientists study changes in mountain glaciers and the Antarctica ice shelves to learn about global temperature changes and their effects (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2001: Synthesis Report, Summary for Policymakers*).

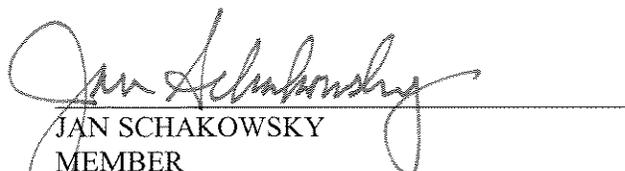
As with any scientific debate, there is a range of views on the rate and extent of changes that may be related to climate change. This diversity of opinion makes it all the more important that the Subcommittee hear from many witnesses about the full range of scientific concerns affecting the climate change debate.

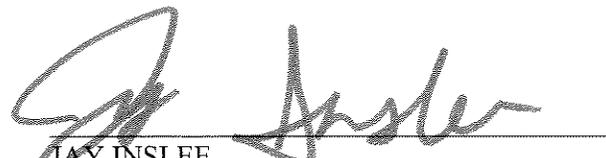
Please let us know promptly whether you will schedule this hearing so that Members and staff on both sides of the aisle will have adequate time to interview and select witnesses and prepare a useful hearing. Thank you for your attention to our request.

Sincerely,

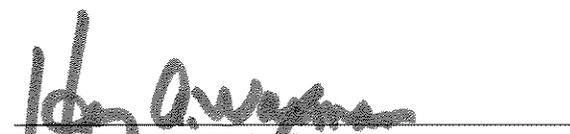

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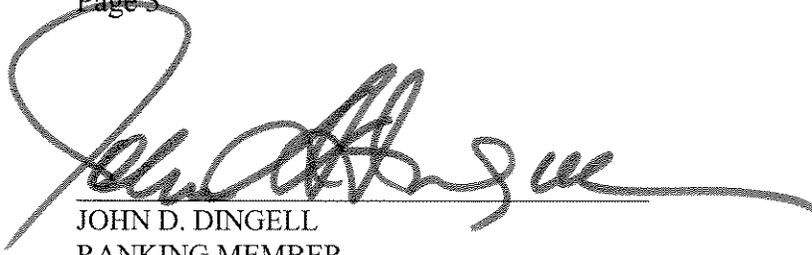

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The Honorable Ed Whitfield

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A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John D. Dingell". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

JOHN D. DINGELL

RANKING MEMBER

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

cc: The Honorable Joe Barton, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Ralph M. Hall, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality

The Honorable Rick Boucher, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality