

## The Honorable John D. Dingell's remarks at the American Jewish Committee Educational Series Breakfast

Statement of Congressman John D. Dingell, Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce

Remarks as Prepared for Delivery  
THE HONORABLE JOHN D. DINGELL  
American Jewish Committee  
Educational Series Breakfast  
August 24, 2007

Thank you, Jay, for your kind words and for inviting me to take part in AJC's educational series. I'm delighted to welcome you all here this morning.

I want you to know how much I appreciate AJC's efforts to provide a forum for community dialogue. Thank you for continually bringing neighbors, leaders, and friends together to discuss some of the most critical issues facing our communities, our state, our country, and our planet.

This morning, we have an opportunity to discuss a particular issue that I know is top of mind for this group - and for many of us on Capitol Hill: global climate change.

The issue of climate change and its effect on our national energy policies - is critical. This has become a topic of great concern in communities all over Michigan and around the world. I understand that, in Detroit, AJC is in the process of creating a task force to better understand climate change and determine how best to address this problem. This is a great thing. And I look forward to hearing from you as the work of your task force begins.

As you examine how best to protect our planet and our nation's prosperity, I want you all to know that this issue has my full and undivided attention.

Like so many of my colleagues in the Congress, I am committed to addressing the issue of climate change this year. I am committed to developing legislation that will better protect the health of our planet. And I am committed to working to reduce carbon emissions by 60 to 80 percent by 2050.

I'm pleased to tell you that, already, a great deal of progress has been made. The day after the 2006 elections, I announced that Congress would take up the fight against global warming. In the short time since the Democrats have controlled Congress, we've moved well beyond the question of whether or not climate change actually exists. And we are now working to determine how best to address the problem.

A few weeks ago, we took a critical first step toward reducing carbon dioxide emissions when we passed energy efficiency legislation that will remove 10.4 BILLION tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere by the end of 2030. That is more than the annual emissions of every car on the road in America today.

This legislation sets new efficiency standards for appliances, requires more efficient lighting and promotes green buildings in the Federal and private sector. It also promotes the development of a smart electricity grid that will deliver energy to households in a more efficient manner, and paves the way for a more intelligent use of electricity that will make innovations such as plug-in hybrid vehicles even more promising.

Additionally, this bill improves loan guarantee programs at the Department of Energy to spur advanced technologies. And it makes the largest investment in our history in biofuels, along with promoting a much-needed biofuels infrastructure.

But to those of you who say this is not enough, you are right. This is just the beginning.

This fall I intend to develop a comprehensive, mandatory, economy-wide program to move us further toward the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 60 to 80 percent by 2050.

My own judgment is that we are going to have to adopt a cap-and-trade system and some form of carbon emission fee to achieve the reductions we need.

We know from the Acid Rain Trading program that was adopted as part of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments that a well-designed cap-and-trade program can achieve our environmental goals in a cost-effective way.

The Europeans have shown us how NOT to design a cap-and-trade program for greenhouse gases -- and we have learned a great deal from their example.

I plan to design a cap-and-trade program that, unlike the European model, will enable us to reach the goal of drastically reducing greenhouse gases in a cost-effective and fair manner

In addition, when Congress reconvenes in September, I intend to introduce legislation that will impose a tax on carbon and petroleum products.

Properly addressing climate change requires us to address the issue of consumption -- and we do that by making consumption more expensive.

My carbon tax proposal will:

- Impose a stiff tax on carbon;
- Increase the tax on gasoline; and
- Remove the mortgage interest deduction on "McMansions" homes over 3,000 square feet.

My legislation will also significantly expand the Earned Income Tax Credit, increase funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, increase funding for renewable energy research and development, conservation, healthcare and the Social Security Trust Fund.

To those who have suggested this may be an attempt to sabotage climate change legislation: you are wrong. I've spent more than half a century in Congress, and I have never introduced legislation with the intention of seeing it fail. I do not intend to start now.

As part of the process of writing climate legislation we will also need to address such matters as motor vehicles and fuels, the role of nuclear power, the proper responsibilities of the States and of the Federal Government, the future of coal under carbon constraints, our relationship to international climate change programs, and many more challenging

issues.

I know many in this group have expressed strong support for increasing fuel efficiency standards. And I want you all to know that I support raising CAFE Standards as part of our efforts to reduce carbon emissions by 60 to 80 percent by 2050.

But I believe we must not harm our nation's and this region's economy in the process.

That's why I am a co-sponsor of the Hill-Terry bill (H.R. 2927), which would mandate separate car and truck standards to meet a total fleet fuel economy standard of between 32 and 35 mpg by 2022; increases up to 40 percent over current standards.

And I'm in good company, as this legislation has the support of 163 bipartisan Members of Congress from all regions of the nation, as well as the UAW, the AFL-CIO, and many others. It has more support than any other current proposal and continues to gain support with every day that passes.

This legislation prescribes aggressive, but attainable, CAFE standards that manufacturers must meet. And it does so in a manner that preserves jobs. In fact, it encourages increased domestic production of advanced technology vehicles.

The Hill-Terry bill proves that it is possible to make significant environmental gains while preserving existing jobs and creating new ones. Unfortunately, I cannot say the same for other proposals to increase CAFE standards that are floating around Washington.

Let me be perfectly clear about one additional matter: the Hill-Terry bill does NOT preempt the States or EPA. I have spoken to its authors about this myth, and they have assured me it is not their intent. They have pledged to work with me, and others, to be certain that nothing in the bill would have that effect.

Again, I want to thank you all for being here today. The conversation we're beginning is an important one. In all my years in Congress, this is the singularly most difficult undertaking of my career.

But I am up to the challenge. I am excited about the opportunity it presents. And I am hopeful that organizations like AJC and concerned citizens and community leaders like those I see before me today will work with me to determine the best ways to move forward.

When it comes to addressing climate change, your interest -- and your involvement -- is so important. By working together, we can accomplish great things for our planet and, more importantly, for the generations of children that will inherit what we leave behind.

Thank you all for being a part of this discussion. I look forward to your questions.

Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce  
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