



For immediate release
March 3, 2010

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About IATP

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. IATP is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota with an office in Geneva.

Agriculture and rural groups defend EPA's ability to protect climate, public health

Over 25 groups urge senate action on climate to protect farmers' livelihoods

MINNEAPOLIS – Over 25 organizations representing agriculture organizations and rural communities sent a letter to the Senate yesterday urging Senators to reject attempts to undermine the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s ability to enforce the Clean Air Act.

The letter is in response to Senate Joint Resolution No. 26, an attempt led by Alaskan Senator Lisa Murkowski to block EPA efforts to regulate greenhouse gases to protect public health under the Clean Air Act. The groups stated that comprehensive legislation to address climate change is ultimately the best approach. Climate legislation has stalled in the Senate, but the lack of legislative progress should not “preclude the EPA from effectively enforcing the Clean Air Act,” the letter said.

“Agriculture and rural communities are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change,” said Jim Kleinschmit of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. “From droughts to floods to temperature extremes, climate change puts farmers' livelihoods at risk and threatens the security of our nation's food supply.”

The EPA has stated that it will tailor new greenhouse gas emission rules to target large emitters, and exempt small carbon emitters. This approach would exclude most farms and ranches, while holding accountable large emitters who have long been subject to EPA standards for other forms of pollution.

“Support for Senator's Murkowski's resolution to block EPA regulation of greenhouse gases would be a vote against the health and security of our nation's farms and of the livelihoods of our farmers,” the letter said. “Fears that farmers and ranchers would be unduly burdened by these regulations appear to not only be short-sighted, but incorrect.”

You can read the full letter at: www.iatp.org.

Signatories of the letter include: Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network, Appalachian Sustainable Development, Beyond Pesticides, California Certified Organic Farmers, California Climate and Agriculture Network, Center for Rural Affairs, Family Farm Defenders, Food and Water Watch, Iowa Environmental Council, Island Grown Initiative, Kansas Rural Center, League of Rural Voters, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service, National Organic Coalition, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society, Nebraska Wildlife Federation, Northeast Organic Farming Association Interstate Council, Organic Valley, Pesticide Action Network North America, Rodale Institute, Rural Advantage, Slow Food USA and The Organic Center.

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