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Expressing the sense of Congress that the United States should act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 16, 2005

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. CHAFEE, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. AKAKA, and Mr. REED) introduced the following joint resolution; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

JOINT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress that the United States should act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Whereas in May 1992, the Senate gave advice and consent to the ratification of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with the intent of reducing global manmade emissions of greenhouse gases, which committed the United States (along with other developed countries) to a nonbinding target of containing emissions levels at 1990 rates by 2000;

Whereas the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was signed by President George Herbert Walker Bush and took effect in March 1994;

Whereas in December 1997, at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change conference of the parties, the Kyoto Protocol, which set targets for reductions in the greenhouse gas emissions of industrialized countries, was established based on principles described in the 1992 framework agreement;

Whereas on February 16, 2005, the Kyoto Protocol will take effect, at which time more than 30 industrialized countries will be legally bound to meet quantitative targets for reducing or limiting the greenhouse gas emissions of those countries, an international carbon trading market will be established through an emissions trading program (which was originally proposed by the United States and enables any industrialized country to buy or sell emissions credits), and the clean development mechanism, which provides opportunities to invest in projects in developing countries that limit emissions while promoting sustainable development, will begin full operation;

Whereas 141 nations (including Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, and Russia) have ratified the Kyoto Protocol;

Whereas the United States is the only member of the Group of 8 that has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol;

Whereas, according to the National Academy of Sciences, “Greenhouse gases are accumulating in Earth’s atmosphere as a result of human activities, causing surface air temperatures and subsurface ocean temperatures to rise . . . Human-induced warming and associated sea level rises are expected to continue through the 21st century.”;

Whereas the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency stated that “Scientists know for certain that

human activities are changing the composition of Earth's atmosphere. Increasing levels of greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide, in the atmosphere since pre-industrial times have been well documented. There is no doubt this atmospheric buildup of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases is largely the result of human activities.”;

Whereas major scientific organizations (including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Meteorological Society, and the American Geophysical Union) have issued statements acknowledging the compelling scientific evidence of human modification of climate;

Whereas in 2001, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimated that global average temperatures have risen by approximately 1 degree Fahrenheit in the past century;

Whereas the report entitled “Our Changing Planet: The U.S. Climate Change Science Program for Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005” states that “Atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane have been increasing for about two centuries as a result of human activities and are now higher than they have been for over 400,000 years.”;

Whereas according to the Arctic climate impact assessment published in November 2004, the Arctic is warming almost twice as fast as the rest of the planet, and winter temperatures in Alaska have increased approximately 5 to 7 degrees Fahrenheit over the past 50 years;

Whereas scientists at the Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research in the United Kingdom have estimated that manmade climate change has already doubled

the risk of heat waves, such as the heat wave that caused more than 15,000 deaths in Europe in 2003;

Whereas scientists at the international conference entitled “Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change”, held in Exeter, England, from February 1, 2005, through February 3, 2005, predicted that an increase in temperature of 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit (which could occur within 25 years) would cause a decline in food production, water shortages, and a net loss of gross domestic product in some developing countries;

Whereas scientists at the international conference entitled “Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change” predicted that an increase in temperature of 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit (which could occur before 2050) could cause a substantial loss of Arctic Sea ice, widespread bleaching of coral reefs, an increased frequency of forest fires, and rivers to become too warm to support trout and salmon, and, in developing countries, would cause an increased risk of hunger, water shortages that would affect an additional 1,500,000,000 people, and significant losses of gross domestic product in some countries;

Whereas scientists at the international conference entitled “Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change” predicted that an increase in temperature of 5.4 degrees Fahrenheit (which could occur before 2070) would cause irreversible damage to the Amazon rainforest, destruction of many coral reefs, a rapid increase in hunger, large losses in crop production in certain regions, which could affect as many as 5,500,000,000 people, and water shortages that would affect an additional 3,000,000,000 people;

Whereas scientists at the international conference entitled “Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change” predicted that an

increase in temperature of greater than 5.4 degrees Fahrenheit (which could occur after 2070) would cause certain regions to become unsuitable for food production, and have a substantial effect on the global gross domestic product;

Whereas in the United States, multiple mechanisms (including market cap and trade programs) exist to carry out mitigation of climate change, sequestration activities in agricultural sectors, and development of new technologies such as clean coal and hydrogen vehicles; and

Whereas, because the United States has critical economic and other interests in international climate policy, it is in the best interest of the United States to play an active role in any international discussion on climate policy: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 SECTION 1. That it is the sense of Congress that the
4 United States should demonstrate international leadership
5 and responsibility regarding reducing the health, environ-
6 mental, and economic risks posed by climate change by—

7 (1) carrying out reasonable and responsible ac-
8 tions to ensure significant and meaningful reduc-
9 tions in emissions of all greenhouse gases;

10 (2) generating climate-friendly technologies by
11 enacting and implementing policies and programs to
12 address all greenhouse gas emissions to promote sus-
13 tained economic growth;

1 (3) participating in international negotiations
2 under the United Nations Framework Convention on
3 Climate Change to achieve significant, long-term,
4 cost-effective reductions in global greenhouse gas
5 emissions; and

6 (4) supporting the establishment of a long-term
7 objective to prevent the global average temperature
8 from increasing by greater than 3.6 degrees Fahr-
9 enheit above preindustrial levels.

10 SEC. 2. The Secretary of State is authorized to and
11 shall engage in efforts with other Federal agencies to lead
12 international negotiations to mitigate impacts of global
13 warning.

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