

March 12, 2009

Dear Chairman Conrad and Ranking Member Gregg:

We oppose using the budget reconciliation process to expedite passage of climate legislation.

Enactment of a cap-and-trade regime is likely to influence nearly every feature of the U.S. economy. Legislation so far-reaching should be fully vetted and given appropriate time for debate, something the budget reconciliation process does not allow. Using this procedure would circumvent normal Senate practice and would be inconsistent with the Administration's stated goals of bipartisanship, cooperation, and openness.

We commend you for holding the recent hearing, entitled "Procedures for Consideration of the Budget Resolution/Reconciliation," which discussed important recommendations for the upcoming budget debate. Maintaining integrity in the budget process is critical to safeguarding the fiscal health of the United States in these challenging times.

Mike Johanns (R-Nev.)

Jim Risch (R-Idaho)

Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.)

Tom Coburn (R-Okla.)

Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.)

David Vitter (R-La.)

Carl Levin (D-Mich.)

John Barrasso (R-Wyo.)

Evan Bayh (D-Ind.)

Bob Corker (R-Tenn.)

Mary Landrieu (D-La.)

Michael Crapo (R-Idaho)

Ben Nelson (D-Neb.)

Roger Wicker (R-Miss.)

Robert Casey (D-Pa.)

John Ensign (R-Nev.)

George Voinovich (R-Ohio)

Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.)

Michael Enzi (R-Wyo.)

Jim Bunning (R-Ky.)

Charles Grassley (R-Iowa)

Susan Collins (R-Maine)

John McCain (R-Ariz.)

Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.)

Kit Bond (R-Mo.)

Thad Cochran (R-Miss.)

Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.)

Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas)