

Perhach, William

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Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2003 12:27 PM
To: Myron Ebell
Subject: Action alert on McLieberman Kyoto Implementation Act

ACTION ALERT

TO: Cooler Heads Coalition Members and Allies
 FROM: Myron Ebell, CEI, 331-2256, mebell@cei.org
 SUBJECT: Senate Vote on S. 139, Lieberman-McCain Kyoto Implementation Act
 DATE: 27th October 2003

The Lieberman-McCain Climate Stewardship Act may come to the Senate floor for debate and an up-or-down vote this week--probably on Wednesday and Thursday the 29th and 30th. This is an important vote because it provides the first unambiguous vote on global warming since the Byrd-Hagel Resolution passed 95-0 in 1997 and because it is essentially the implementing legislation for the Kyoto Protocol. It is also a dangerous vote because, since it has no chance of enactment, it could be viewed by some Senators as a free vote which will increase their environmental vote ratings without doing any damage.

In short, S. 139 (hereafter referred to as McLieberman) would create a mandatory cap for greenhouse gas emissions and create a cap-and-trade scheme for sharing the pain of energy rationing. Senator McCain said earlier this month that they will offer only the phase one target in order to make the cost seem smaller and thereby "build momentum" for energy rationing. The phase one target would require that total U. S. greenhouse gas emissions be reduced to 2000 levels by 2010.

Target List

Encouragement needed

Norm Coleman of Minnesota and Gordon Smith of Oregon are in States where voting No is a tough vote. They are with us, but could use help in their States to explain what's wrong with McLieberman.

Republicans

Lugar-IN
 Specter-PA
 Alexander-TN
 DeWine-OH
 Fitzgerald-IL
 Gregg-NH

Democrats

Pryor-AR
 Lincoln-AR
 Bayh-IN
 Ben Nelson-NE
 Levin-MI
 Levin-MI
 Johnson-SD
 Baucus-MT
 Rockefeller-WV
 Byrd-WV

We should have many of these Senators, but each appears on at least one of the lists I have consulted, so we must not take any of them for granted. Democrats that seem solid include Dorgan and Conrad (ND wouldn't have electricity without brown coal), Breaux and Landrieu, and of course Zell Miller. Snowe and Collins, who come from the morally superior State of Maine, intend to export Maine's failed economic policies to the rest of the nation, apparently in hopes of making us as poor as Maine.

Brief talking points

1. McLieberman repeals the Byrd-Hagel Resolution.
2. McLieberman implements the Kyoto Protocol. True, the initial target is lower and the timetable is slower, but it would be legally enforceable, which is more than nearly every nation that has ratified the Kyoto Protocol is doing.
3. McLieberman is a con game. By only offering phase one now, the potential costs look fairly low. But there is no point in doing phase one if you are not committed to going much further. As energy inefficiencies are squeezed out of the economy, each successive phase will be much more expensive than the previous one.
4. McLieberman creates the institutions and incentives necessary to ration energy forever. When has a regulatory program ever been abolished or even trimmed back?
5. McLieberman creates a cap-and-trade program, which is a hidden tax. Like a tax, it will reduce energy supplies and raise prices.
6. McLieberman is a CAFÉ standard for the whole economy.
7. Section 336-"Ensuring Target Adequacy"-directs the Under Secretary of Commerce to re-assess the limits for emissions every two years.
8. Tiny reductions in U. S. and EU and Japanese emissions are going to be swamped by huge emissions increases in China, India, Indonesia, and Brazil (see NYT, 22nd October, page 1). As for getting these countries to agree to emissions cuts, China has said repeatedly not now and not for fifty years.
9. McLieberman is all pain and no gain. The costs far outweigh the benefits, which are zero. McLieberman means that today's natural gas prices are the bottom of the upward curve. More and more people will get to choose between heating and eating.
10. The scientific case for global warming alarmism is shaky at best. But even if alarmism turns out to be true, McLieberman is the wrong way to go. It puts the U. S. on a dead-end road that cannot possibly work. The Kyoto Protocol bandwagon has stopped and the wheels are coming off. Kyoto will probably never go into force, and if it does Japan and the EU will not meet their targets. The McLieberman approach has already failed. Senators should vote No even if they accept alarmism.