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Samuel A. Thornstrom
01/18/2003 05:33:38 PM

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To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
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Subject: Monday's NYT to feature Administration climate change initiative

Monday's New York Times will feature a story by Andy Revkin about the voluntary business sector challenges initiative that we've been developing and are currently planning to announce on Feb. 6. The story will focus on the strong efforts that the Administration has made to obtain meaningful and feasible commitments from industry sectors to improve the greenhouse gas intensity of their sectors over the next decade, as the President challenged them to do on Feb. 14, 2002. Andy has a fair bit of detail about several of the commitments that we've gotten -- specifically, the magnesium, petroleum, natural gas, electricity sectors and the Business Roundtable. (There are several other agreements being developed that will not be in the story.) The story will indicate that at least some of these agreements are very strong; environmentalists will be call for additional mandatory measures, while some conservatives (CEI) will criticize the initiative for giving comfort to the environmental activists.

We've chosen to not give Andy any statement on the record, given that we're trying to keep the lid on the remaining elements of the initiative until rollout on Feb. 6. My one comment for the story (as an Administration source) was that we see the upcoming announcement of these agreements as a step forward in an ongoing process to meet our 18 percent intensity goal, not the completion of this effort. The industrial sectors involved in this initiative strongly share that sentiment, so that's an important message to emphasize.

I expect Andy's story will generate a flurry of follow-up inquiries from other reporters. The trade associations involved have agreed to not give out any additional details about the initiative prior to rollout. Attached below for your reference are background materials from the President's Feb 14 speech and policy book, which provide a useful context for this initiative. I'd suggest responding to media inquiries by providing them with copies of the material below and simply confirming that the initiative is under development.



2-14-02 VSA background.do

"To achieve this goal, our nation must move forward on many fronts, looking at every sector of our economy. We will challenge American businesses to further reduce emissions. Already, agreements with the semiconductor and aluminum industries and others have dramatically cut emissions of some of the most potent greenhouse gases. We will build on these successes with new agreements and greater reductions."

-- President George W. Bush, February 14, 2002

From the White House Global Climate Change Policy Book February 14, 2002:

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Business Challenges

The President challenged American businesses and industries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Already, agreements with the semi-conductor and aluminum industries, and with industries that emit methane, are dramatically reducing emissions of the most potent greenhouse gases. The President's plan will build on these successes, with broader agreements and greater reductions.

Company Challenges

➤ **EPA's Climate Leaders Initiative:** EPA will launch a new, voluntary Climate Leaders program with a group of major companies including: Florida Power and Light, GM, Lockheed Martin, Miller Brewing Company, Bethlehem Steel, Interface Inc., SC Johnson and Holcim Inc. These companies have agreed to test new greenhouse gas reporting guidelines as the basis for agreeing to targets in the future. Each participant will establish an individual goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and will voluntarily report those emissions. The Climate Leaders program provides a significant opportunity to achieve the greenhouse gas intensity reductions set forth in this policy through a voluntary approach. In the coming months, the Administration will aggressively pursue additional corporate partners representing a wider spectrum of the U.S. economy.

Sector Challenges

➤ **Semiconductors:** On March 13, 2001, EPA and the Semiconductor Industry Association signed a new voluntary agreement, the PFC Reduction Climate Partnership. Under this partnership, the industry agreed to reduce emissions of perfluorocarbons (PFCs) by 10 percent from 1995 levels by the end of 2010. The expected reduction of 13.7 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2010 alone is comparable to taking 12 million cars off the road. PFCs have, on average, 10,000 times the potency of carbon dioxide over 100 years, and persist in the atmosphere 2,000 to 50,000 years.

➤ **Aluminum:** Twelve of the thirteen U.S. primary aluminum producers, representing 96 percent of the U.S. primary aluminum production capacity, have joined EPA's Voluntary Aluminum Industrial Partnership. Companies participating in this program have committed to make reductions in two potent PFCs, tetrafluoromethane (CF₄) and hexafluoroethane (C₂F₆). The program met its 2000 goal to reduce PFC emissions from U.S. primary aluminum smelting by 45% -- equivalent to 1.8 million metric tons of carbon -- using cost-effective approaches that make economic and environmental sense for the partners.

➤ **Methane:** Because of the potency of methane relative to carbon dioxide, a "methane-first" strategy for greenhouse gas mitigation is cost-effective. A variety of U.S. industry and government partnerships have reduced methane emissions, and they are expected to hold emissions at or below 1990 levels through and beyond 2010. Partners in EPA's methane programs are projected to maintain emissions below 1990 levels through 2010.

- ✓ EPA's Natural Gas STAR program includes companies representing 40 percent of the U.S. natural gas production, 72 percent of transmission company pipeline miles, 49 percent of distribution company service connections, and 23 percent of processing throughput. This partnership has achieved significant reductions. In 2000, EPA estimates a reduction in methane emissions of 4 million metric tons of carbon equivalent, and projects for 2010 a reduction of 6 million metric tons of carbon equivalent.
- ✓ EPA's Coalbed Methane Outreach Program (CMOP) encourages industry to reduce methane emissions from underground coal mines. The program provides technical assistance to mining companies on technologies for recovered methane. EPA estimates that CMOP reduced 2 million metric tons carbon equivalent in 2000.
- ✓ In the agriculture sector, USDA and EPA have partnered on the Ag-STAR program and the Ruminant Livestock Efficiency Program (RLEP), which focus on reducing methane emissions. The overall impact of these two programs on greenhouse gas emissions has been small on a national scale, but program stakeholders in the agricultural community have demonstrated that the practices can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase productivity.

Message Sent To: _____

Daniel J. Bartlett/WHO/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Suzy DeFrancis/WHO/EOP@EOP
Lawrence A. Fleischer/WHO/EOP@EOP
Scott McClellan/WHO/EOP@EOP
Claire E. Buchan/WHO/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Nicolle Devenish/WHO/EOP@EOP
Kenneth A. Lisaius/WHO/EOP@EOP
Jeanie S. Mamo/WHO/EOP@EOP
Scott Stanzel/WHO/EOP@EOP
William T. Griffin/WHO/EOP@EOP
Taylor S. Gross/WHO/EOP@EOP
Christopher J. Orr/WHO/EOP@EOP
Brian R. Besanceney/OPD/EOP@EOP
Jay P. Lefkowitz/OPD/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Tevi Troy/OPD/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Joel D. Kaplan/WHO/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Kristen Silverberg/WHO/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Robert C. McNally/OPD/EOP@EOP
Karen Y. Knutson/OVP/EOP@EOP
Trent D. Duffy/OMB/EOP@EOP
Jennifer Millerwise/OVP/EOP@EOP
gibson.tom@epa.gov @ inet
Pemberton.John@epamail.epa.gov @ inet
seidel.stephen@epa.gov @ inet
rudzinski.suzanne@epa.gov @ inet
hogan.kathleen@epa.gov @ inet
martyak.joe@epa.gov @ inet
Goforth.Prudence@epamail.epa.gov @ inet
bell.steffanie@epamail.epa.gov @ inet
kremer.cece@epa.gov @ inet
larisa.dobriansky@hq.doe.gov @ inet
kevin.kolevar@hq.doe.gov @ inet
bart.marcois@hq.doe.gov @ inet
al.cobb@hq.doe.gov @ inet
jeanne.lopatto@hq.doe.gov @ inet
joseph.davis@hq.doe.gov @ inet
Jill.Vieth@hq.doe.gov @ inet
chet.lunner@ost.dot.gov @ inet
leonardo.alcivar@ost.dot.gov @ inet
quintin.kendall@ost.dot.gov @ inet
rob.gould@fra.dot.gov @ inet
alisa.harrison@usda.gov @ inet
whohenst@mailoce.oce.usda.gov @ inet
eric_ruff@ios.doi.gov @ inet
Aimee_Mikolajek@ios.doi.gov @ inet
chris_keamey@ios.doi.gov @ inet
James Connaughton/CEQ/EOP@EOP
Phil Cooney/CEQ/EOP@EOP
Kenneth L. Peel/CEQ/EOP@EOP
Debbie S. Fiddelke/CEQ/EOP@EOP
Dana M. Perino/CEQ/EOP@EOP

Daniel J. Bartlett/WHO/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Suzy DeFrancis/WHO/EOP@EOP
Lawrence A. Fleischer/WHO/EOP@EOP
Scott McClellan/WHO/EOP@EOP
Claire E. Buchan/WHO/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Nicolle Devenish/WHO/EOP@EOP
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Jeanie S. Mamo/WHO/EOP@EOP
Scott Stanzel/WHO/EOP@EOP
William T. Griffin/WHO/EOP@EOP
Taylor S. Gross/WHO/EOP@EOP
Christopher J. Orr/WHO/EOP@EOP
Brian R. Besanceney/OPD/EOP@EOP
Jay P. Lefkowitz/OPD/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Tevi Troy/OPD/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Joel D. Kaplan/WHO/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Kristen Silverberg/WHO/EOP@Exchange@EOP
Robert C. McNally/OPD/EOP@EOP
Karen Y. Knutson/OVP/EOP@EOP
Trent D. Duffy/OMB/EOP@EOP
Jennifer Millerwise/OVP/EOP@EOP
gibson.tom [REDACTED]
Pemberton.John [REDACTED]
seidel.stephen [REDACTED]
rudzinski.suzanne [REDACTED]
hogan.kathleen [REDACTED]
martyak.joe [REDACTED]
Goforth.Prudence [REDACTED]
bell.steffanie [REDACTED]
kremer.cece [REDACTED]
larisa.dobriansky [REDACTED]
kevin.kolevar [REDACTED]
bart.marcois [REDACTED]
al.cobb [REDACTED]
jeanne.lopatto [REDACTED]
joseph.davis [REDACTED]
Jill.Vieth [REDACTED]
chet.lunner [REDACTED]
leonardo.alcivar [REDACTED]
quintin.kendall [REDACTED]
rob.gould [REDACTED]
alisa.harrison [REDACTED]
whohenst [REDACTED]
eric_ruff [REDACTED]
Aimee_Mikolajek [REDACTED]
chris_keamey [REDACTED]
James Connaughton/CEQ/EOP@EOP
Phil Cooney/CEQ/EOP@EOP
Kenneth L. Peel/CEQ/EOP@EOP
Debbie S. Fiddelke/CEQ/EOP@EOP
Dana M. Perino/CEQ/EOP@EOP