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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 12, 1986

Mr. Lee Thomas  
Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Thomas:

The purpose of this letter is to formally request that EPA undertake two studies on climate change due to the greenhouse effect and submit them to Congress no later than March 31, 1988.

At the outset, we want to thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Environmental Pollution at hearings last June on the problems of global climate change and stratospheric ozone depletion. Your testimony showed a refreshing appreciation for the magnitude of the environmental risks presented by these problems and the need to be exploring incremental actions that can be taken to reduce these risks.

As summarized at those hearings and elsewhere, the scientific community appears to have reached agreement that substantial ozone depletion may result from continued use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's) and that increases in CFC's and other greenhouse gases are like to produce global climate changes greater than any in man's history. There is a very real possibility that man - through ignorance or indifference, or both - is irreversibly altering the ability of our atmosphere to perform basic life support functions.

What is urgently needed now is for us to begin to deal with these issues. They can no longer be treated solely as important scientific questions. First, some actions including limits on CFC's appear warranted in the near term. Second, we need to expand efforts to more fully understand the effects that atmospheric pollution has on the environment and to develop an extensive range of policy options for dealing with the serious global problem of climate change due to the greenhouse effect. This second need has led to our request for two EPA studies.

One of the studies we are requesting should examine the health and environmental effects of climate change. This study should include, but not be limited to, the potential impacts on agriculture, forests, wetlands, human health, rivers, lakes and estuaries as well as other ecosystems and societal impacts. This

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study should be designed to include original analyses to identify and fill in where important research gaps exist, and to solicit the opinions of knowledgeable people throughout the country through a process of public hearings and meetings.

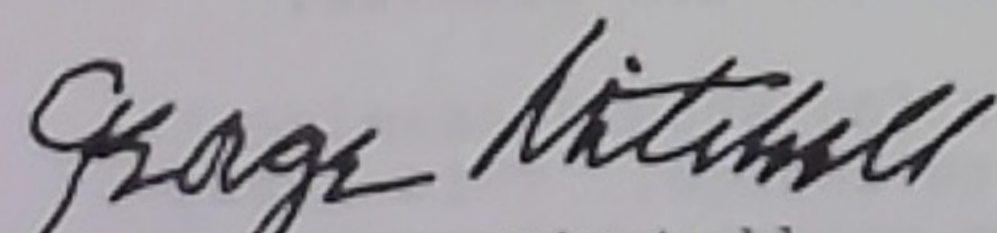
The other study should include an examination of the policy options that, if implemented, would stabilize current levels of atmospheric greenhouse gas emissions. This study should address: the need for and implications of significant changes in energy policy, including energy efficiency and development of alternatives to fossil fuel; reductions in the use of CFC's; ways to reduce other greenhouse gases such as methane and nitrous oxides; as well as the potential for and effects of reducing deforestation and increasing reforestation efforts. It should include a series of policy options and recommendations for concrete steps to be taken along with a discussion of the potential effectiveness of each for limiting climate change. Since the United States must take a leadership role in addressing these global problems, the policy options that you develop should include a specific plan for what the United States can do to stabilize its share of greenhouse gas emissions as well as a plan for helping other nations to achieve comparable levels of control.

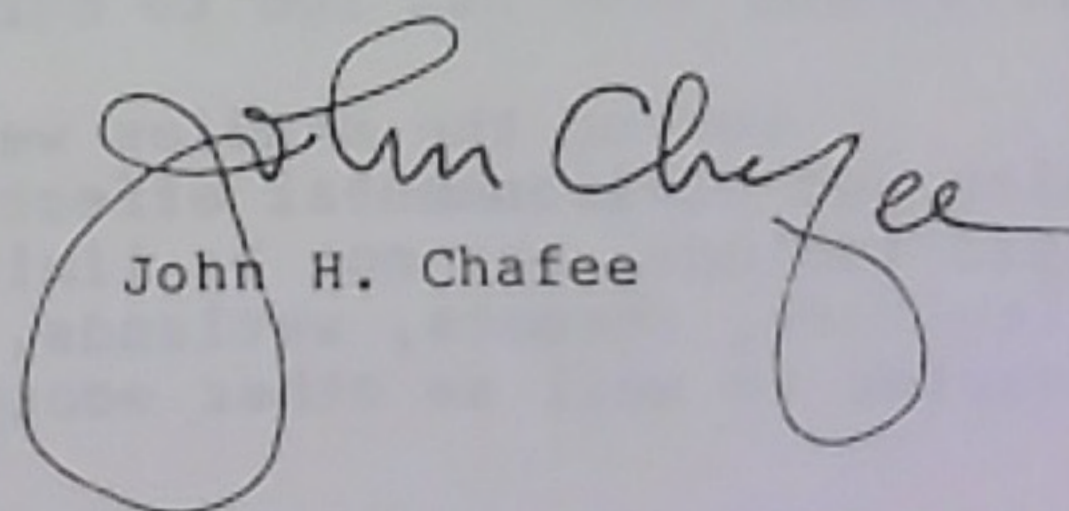
We realize that undertaking this project will be a significant challenge and will require substantial resources. We therefore urge you to immediately direct the necessary funds in both FY-87 and FY-88 to assure that you can comply with our request to promptly conduct these studies.

Many of us believe that these are among the most important environmental problems of the next decade. The sooner you can provide recommendations to Congress, the sooner we will be able to provide leadership throughout the world to prevent a pending environmental disaster.

Your personal attention and prompt reply to this request will be greatly appreciated. We look forward to working with you on these important environmental problems. Please do not hesitate to contact us for additional guidance and assistance.

Sincerely,

  
George J. Mitchell

  
John H. Chafee

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*Albert Gore Jr.*  
Albert Gore

*Max Baucus*  
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*Patrick Leahy*  
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*Robert T. Stafford*  
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*Dave Durenberger*  
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*Gordon J. Humphrey*  
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