



Senator Feinstein Expresses Concern over Electric Cooperative Report Trivializing Effects of Global Warming

August 4, 2006

Washington, DC – In response to a report issued recently by the largest electric distribution cooperative in the United States doubting the scientific proof behind the effects of climate change and the economic viability of renewable energy, Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) has sent a letter to the association's general manager to express her concern regarding their trivialization of the serious dangers related to global warming.

“Climate change is a serious problem that is facing our country and the world. It greatly saddens me to know that your Association is trivializing an issue of such global significance,” Senator Feinstein said.

The following is the text of Senators Feinstein's letter to Stanley R. Lewandowski, general manager of Colorado's Intermountain Rural Electric Association:

August 4, 2006

Dear Mr. Lewandowski:

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the views articulated about climate change in your July 17th memorandum. I was extremely disappointed to read your skepticism about the scientific proof behind the effects of climate change.

There is convincing evidence that global warming is occurring. A recent April 2006 report issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), entitled Temperature Trends in the Lower Atmosphere, states the following:

‘Studies to detect climate change and attribute its causes using patterns of observed temperature change in space and time show clear evidence of human influences on the climate system (due to changes in greenhouse gases, aerosols, and stratospheric ozone).’

In addition, the National Academy of Sciences has found that the Earth's surface temperature rose about one degree Fahrenheit during the 20th century. This warming process has intensified in the past 20 years and has been accompanied by a documented retreat of glaciers, thinning of arctic ice, rising sea levels, and the increasing likelihood of droughts and floods.

I was equally troubled to learn of your view that increasing our nation's use of renewable forms of energy would lead to a decrease in growth in our nation's economy. I believe this is simply not true. According to a recent report published by Environmental Entrepreneurs and Cleantech Venture Network, every \$100 million invested in green technology venture capital leads directly to the creation of 2700 jobs, and many more indirectly.

I am confident that the July 17th memorandum does not reflect the views of all electric cooperatives. For example, the Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative, an electric cooperative in California, is currently planning to build wind power facilities to meet at least one-quarter of its load. In addition, my home state of California is leading the nation in using renewable sources of energy for electricity generation.

Climate change is a serious problem that is facing our country and the world. It greatly saddens me to know that your Association is trivializing an issue of such global significance. I would encourage you to reexamine the scientific evidence behind climate change.

Sincerely,

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

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