

December 15, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are major U.S.-based companies, many of which are attending COP-15, urging your leadership in helping to secure a robust international agreement now to address global climate change. This agreement has to include significant near- and long-term emissions reductions targets and strong finance provisions, with a substantial commitment of new long-term finance from developed nations, including the United States, following on the “fast start” commitments that already have been made. Such provisions also should consist of a structure for the long term and should leverage private sector investments. An international agreement also must facilitate clean technology development and transfer, with appropriate intellectual property protections. Such an agreement will provide the market certainty that will unleash the investments needed to create jobs and enhance U.S. competitiveness.

We must put the United States on the path to significant emissions reductions, a stronger economy, and a new position of leadership in the global effort to stabilize our climate. The costs of inaction far outweigh the costs of action. Our environment and economy are at stake. In addition, millions of people in developing and low-lying nations are at risk from climate and related economic dislocations, which further pose geopolitical threats. These factors highlight the urgency for the Administration to achieve a global deal in the coming days that moves us ever closer toward a legally-binding agreement that will protect us and future generations.

Many businesses are doing their part by creating innovative technologies and reducing their carbon footprints, as well as implementing complementary efficiency and renewable energy measures. However, a “sufficiently ambitious, effective and globally equitable deal [is essential to] create the conditions for transformational change in our economy and deliver the economic signals that companies need,” if they are to invest in a low carbon future.¹

The urgency to act is clear and the need for strong leadership is paramount. We pledge to support your leadership efforts in helping secure a strong global agreement. Moreover, businesses should provide input into the negotiating process to ensure that the policies being developed will not create unintended consequences and will maximize opportunities for innovation. We view the latest bipartisan discussions being led by Senators Kerry, Graham, and Lieberman as critical to domestic action, and pledge our support for their continued efforts in the weeks and months ahead, too.

¹ Prince of Wales’s Corporate Leaders Group on Climate Change and University of Cambridge Programme for Sustainability Leadership, “The Copenhagen Communique on Climate Change,” 2009.

We thank you in advance for helping to protect our economic, environmental and national security interests for the future. Your forceful leadership is essential to securing an international deal to address climate change in Copenhagen. We look forward to working with you in the coming days and going forward following the Copenhagen conference.

Sincerely,

Aspen Skiing Company
Ben & Jerry's
Business Council for
Sustainable Energy (BCSE)
Clif Bar and Company
Dow Chemical
eBay
Eileen Fisher
Gap Inc.
GroSolar

Ingersoll Rand
Jones Lang LaSalle
Jupiter Oxygen Corporation
Levi Strauss & Co.
Lykes Brothers, Inc.
Microsoft
MissionPoint Capital Partners
Nike
Northern Grid
PG&E
PSEG

Seventh Generation
Solazyme, Inc.
Solar Energy Industries
Association (SEIA)
Starbucks
Stonyfield Farm
Sun Microsystems
Symantec
The North Face
Timberland