

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 23, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
SH-522
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

We write today to express our support for including a national Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) in any energy legislation that is brought to the floor this summer and want to work with you to ensure that the strongest possible RES passes in the Senate. We also strongly urge you not to weaken the standard by including non-renewable energy sources. A strong national Renewable Electricity Standard is essential for creating American jobs and making the U.S. a leader in the increasingly competitive global clean energy industry. Failure to enact a strong standard could in fact result in the loss of jobs and economic development in the U.S. renewable energy industry.

This Congress has made great strides toward passing a Renewable Electricity Standard – in particular, we would like to commend Chairman Bingaman’s work to include a RES in the bipartisan bill produced by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. However, we believe that when it gets to the floor, it should be strengthened to achieve our potential of creating hundreds of thousands of American jobs and reinstating the U.S. as a leader in the increasingly competitive global clean energy industry. A strong RES will give certainty to clean energy companies that are looking to invest billions of dollars in the U.S. to manufacture wind turbines, solar panels and other renewable energy components. Without a national commitment to renewable energy, we miss an important opportunity to grow our manufacturing sector and create jobs while moving toward a cleaner energy future.

America is competing for renewable energy manufacturing jobs with dozens of other countries, including China, that have firm renewable electricity commitments in place. We cannot afford to lose this new global race, and the window of opportunity is narrowing. In order to expand capacity for manufacturing renewable energy equipment in the U.S., we need to demonstrate that the U.S. is committed to a growing market for renewable energy.

There is great job-creating potential in establishing a national Renewable Electricity Standard. For example, a 20 percent by 2020 standard would result in 191,000 more jobs supported by the renewable electricity industry than without a national standard, according to recent study by Navigant Consulting. The same study shows that a 25 percent by 2025 standard would create an additional 274,000 jobs. These jobs would be particularly concentrated in the Southeast, Midwest, and other states with a solid manufacturing base.

A strong Renewable Electricity Standard should be an integral part of our national energy policy. We urge you to ensure that we give our country the opportunity to win the clean energy race by including a Renewable Electricity Standard in energy legislation that is considered this summer.

Sincerely,

Byron L. Dorgan Tom Udall

Mark Udall Amy Klobuchar

Ron Wyden Al Franken

Dianne Feinstein Allen Dean

Jim Johnson Nur Farida

Kent Conrad Bob Sanders

Kirsten E. Gillibrand Dianne Feinstein

Jan Tost

Matt F. Roth

Jeffrey A. Merkley

Maria Cantwell

Patty Murray

Frank R. Lautenberg

John F. Kerry

Chris Dodd

Tom Harkin

Ted Koppel

Mark Begich

Tom Carper

Fabrizio Ledy