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Amy Klobuchar

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ADDRESS

SENATOR AMY KLOBUCHAR

Hello everyone, and thanks for inviting me to participate in this really important symposium on environmental law. Please accept my apologies for not being able to join you in person. I so enjoy being part of the St. Thomas School of Law and having St. Thomas as part of our community. I serve on the advisory committee for the School of Law. I also understand that Archbishop Flynn spoke with you earlier today about environmental stewardship. Recently, he has spoken out very wisely on the issue of global warming, and we are all grateful for it. And it is global warming, the dangers and the opportunities that come with it that I want to speak about today.

Every day Congress makes decisions that have a great impact on the American people and people throughout the world, but our decisions on global warming may well be the ones that have the most profound impact on our future generations and the very fate of our earth. As people of faith, we are aware of our obligations to be stewards of the environment. So I see our country's response to global warming as not only a measurement of international leadership, but also of our national character.

The science is clear about global warming. The temperature in this country, this world, has gone up about one degree in the last century. It doesn't sound like a lot, but when you go back to the Ice Age and to the height of the Ice Age, it has only gone up about five degrees since that point. The estimates from the EPA are somewhere in the range of eight degrees in the next century. That is why this is so critical.

I actually just went to Greenland with a number of other Senators and saw firsthand the effects of climate change in our environment. Water was coming off these gigantic icebergs like spigots, and it was a sight to see. It was beautiful to see Greenland, and you will be happy to know I didn't purchase the beluga whale earrings and the seal mittens and other things they had for sale. But it was just an outstanding sight to see how much water and ice was flowing into our oceans. We basically lost the combined size of Texas and Arizona into our oceans in the last few years. They are growing potatoes where they used to have ice.

I believe we need to immediately and significantly reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. In Congress, now, we are no longer debating the need to address these issues. We are starting to talk about what we can do about it. You know this is an issue that used to be the focus of scientists and people

that were very involved in the environmental community, but now it is a concern of many Americans. I hear from hunters in Hibbing who are worried about their wetlands. I hear from ski resort owners in northeastern Minnesota who are seeing a drop in revenues because there is not enough snow. I see kids with little penguin buttons who want to save the penguins. I see it in the city councils in tiny towns that are changing out their light bulbs. I hear from entrepreneurs who see this as an opportunity. It's not too late to act, and I think the citizens of our state believe that. But we need to stabilize and reduce greenhouse emissions within the next decade and reduce them significantly by mid-century. You know the states have really been taking the lead on this. Minnesota is right out front with the work we have done. It was Justice Brandeis that once said that states should be the laboratories of democracy, and by that I don't think he meant action by the federal government. The idea is that one courageous state, like some of the bipartisan work our state has done, can take the lead and show as an experiment what can be done. We now know what can work with from what we are seeing around the states and this country, and now it is time for the federal government to take the lead.

There is no doubt that global warming is currently presenting us with a world of dangers and risks, but I also believe that it gives us a universe of opportunities. I believe that technology and innovation will be key in solving our climate and energy problems. In solving these problems, we have the opportunity to develop revolutionary new technologies and create whole new industries. Here in the United States, we have the science, we have the universities, we have the technological know-how, and we have the financial capital. In Minnesota, we have the fields to grow the fuel that will keep our nation moving. We have the wind energy to propel our economy forward. We are the state that brought the world the Post-it Note® and the pacemaker, and I know we have the ingenuity to address these challenges with energy.

I believe the challenge we have with global warming is matched by the potential for positive change. A few months ago, some of the largest companies in the world came together to form the U.S. Climate Action Partnership, and I am on the Environment and Public Works Committee. A number of these companies testified before us, including General Motors, General Electric, DuPont, Dow Chemical Co., Duke Energy and many others. They seek a mandatory, market-driven approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions—an approach they have come to realize will drive development of new greener technology and become an engine for new economic growth and job creation. This is because an economy-wide, cap-and-trade system draws on the power of the marketplace to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a cost-effective and flexible manner. I have been working with my colleagues to pass a responsible, economy-wide, cap-and-trade program for greenhouse gases. This isn't just Democrats working on this; right now,

Senator Warner is working with Senator Lieberman to come up with a compromise, bipartisan piece of legislation that we can move through our committee, and I am eager to work with them. As a first step, I actually introduced my own legislation (and it was my first major bill) along with Senator Olympia Snowe, a Republican from Maine, to implement the nation's first greenhouse gas registry.[1] I like to think of it as a carbon counter to measure the sources and volumes of greenhouse gas emissions. This is just a first step, but we understand that, while there is growing momentum for change in Congress, we have to have the right information to get a cap-and-trade system up and running. That's where I have been assured that the bill that comes out of our committee is going to include this measure.

We should also be moving forward on an aggressive national, renewable electricity standard on par with what Minnesota put into law earlier this year. In Minnesota, we now have a twenty-five by twenty-five standard.[2] That means by the year 2025, the state's energy companies are required to generate twenty-five percent of their electricity from renewable sources such as wind, water, solar and biomass.[3] The standard is even higher for the state's largest utility, Xcel Energy, which must reach thirty percent by 2020 with biomass, wind, solar and other forms of alternative energy. It's very exciting what's going on with wind energy right now in our state and in our country. I can tell you in our country there are so many wind turbines. Right now in the Pipestone area they have opened up a bed-and-breakfast, so if anyone is looking for a romantic weekend you can go down there, spend the night, and in the morning look at a wind turbine—that's the package.

You know thirty-four other states have looked at what Minnesota has done and have enacted similar standards. Never before have we seen such interest in this area of renewable energy and energy-efficiency technologies. The industries for solar, wind and biomass energy are expanding at rates exceeding thirty percent annually, but, at the same time, we're no longer the world leader in two important clean energy fields. We rank third in wind power production behind Denmark and Spain. We rank third in solar behind Germany and Japan. Ironically, these countries surpassed us by largely adopting technologies that had been first developed here in the United States. We came up with the right ideas, but we did not capitalize on these innovations with policies adequate to spur development. Our foreign competition was able to leapfrog over American businesses because these other countries have government-driven investment incentives, aggressive renewable energy targets and other bold national policies.

1. Greenhouse Gas Accountability Act of 2007, H.R. 2651, 110th Cong. (2007).
2. MINN. STAT. ANN. § 216C.05 (West 2008).
3. *Id.*

I am pleased to report that the Senate passed a new energy bill this summer that helps foster this growing interest in clean energy.[4] Previous energy bills were all about incentives for fossil fuel exploration and development, but this energy bill is different. It focuses on the deployment of clean energy technologies and energy efficiency. It marks the beginning of America's new energy pact. The old approach harmed our environment and increased our dependency on fossil fuels, but clean technology and energy efficiency take us down a different path. The new energy bill is better policy because it promotes entirely new industries and improved technologies while increasing our energy security and protecting our environment.

One of the most important provisions in this Senate energy bill is the increase in our fuel efficiency for cars and trucks. It requires cars and light trucks to achieve thirty-five miles per gallon for model year 2020.[5] Making our nation's cars and trucks more fuel efficient not only saves billions of barrels of oil each year, but also creates new industries for hybrid automobiles, drivetrain technologies, lighter-weight materials and alternative fuels.

Ford and Edison International have already announced the nation's first collaboration between automakers and utilities to examine the future of plug-in hybrid vehicles. Although there still is a lot of work to be done on affordability, reliability, battery technology and safety, it's a step down the right path. Now, I will tell you this just passed the Senate. We need it to pass the House, and then we need to have the President sign it into law. But it is putting standards into place like that, that's going to spur this investment. Projects like these are going to lead to an environmentally responsible transportation sector that's far less dependent on fossil fuels. This also shows that, if we put these incentives into law and make the right investments, we can strengthen our economy while combating global warming at the same time. This is what Tom Friedman was talking about in his article, and you know he is from Minnesota. In the front page article of the New York Times Magazine, he talked about a green new deal—and a green revolution.[6]

Nowhere is this truer than in our agriculture sector. I serve on the Agriculture Committee, and I am taking a lead on one of our newest ideas for ethanol: cellulosic ethanol. There are many more exciting developments in this area, and one of them is clearly cellulosic ethanol. I want agriculture's role in fighting climate change to be a major new focus of, and include forward-looking farming practices in, the new farm bill that Congress is writing this year. America's heartland holds great promise for homegrown solutions to global warming. The Agriculture Committee is chaired by our good neighbor to the south, Senator Harkin of Iowa, and I am taking the

4. Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, Pub. L. No. 110–140, 121 Stat. 1492 (2007).

5. *Id.* at 1499.

6. Tom Friedman, *The Power of Green*, N.Y. TIMES MAG., Apr. 15, 2007, at 40.

lead to introduce legislation that will offer incentives to farmers to produce a new generation of energy crops suitable for cellulosic ethanol production.

There is now exciting research coming out of the University of Minnesota led by Regents Professor David Tillman and Dr. Jason Hill that highlights the energy potential of native grasses (like switchgrass). Their research shows that perennial grasses grown on degraded soils can produce as much new or net energy per acre as corn and soybeans. You might call them "prairie fuels" or "energy crops." They contain from five to eight times the energy that's used to make them. These energy crops hold great promise for farmers because they can be grown on marginal land that can't produce a high yield of corn or soybeans, and they restore the land while they are growing. Their deep root system sequesters carbon and puts organic material back in the soil, and this is just scratching the surface.

Think about the start of the information age. The first computers were in large rooms, and they were only set out to accomplish elementary calculations. But we had to start there to get where we are now, with powerful computer devices that fit into the palm of a hand and enormous computing power that's found everywhere in our daily lives. I think our homegrown, renewable energy revolution is on the same trajectory. There is a vast potential for new technologies, new jobs and new economic development, especially in rural development. At the same time, the potential is vast for reducing our production of greenhouse gases. We're not going to be able to solve this problem ourselves. All countries must participate in a global solution to a global problem. China, India, Brazil and other developing economies must be weaned away from fossil fuels. But what is their incentive to do this if the United States won't? I hope this is something you're going to talk about today. The United States must return to a leadership role in international climate change negotiations. There are real economic benefits, both from reducing the waste and inefficiencies inherent in greenhouse gas emissions and from developing new climate-friendly technologies. As other nations address climate change, they also reap the economic benefits from new technological innovation.

Does the U.S. want to be a leader in creating the new green technologies and the new green industries of the future, or are we going to sit back and watch the opportunity pass by? I want us to be a leader. The stakes are as high as they get, but after years of neglect Congress is stepping forward and confronting this challenge. Some people are combating global warming because it takes forty-two more trips to haul the same amount of cargo as it did a few years ago across Lake Superior due to lower water levels in the lake. That's because the ice, by the way, is melting more, and so it lowers the water levels in the lake. Others are doing it because areas where they can take their families snowmobiling are shrinking or because their favorite cold-water stream no longer holds their prize trout, or others are doing it because their faith drove them to do so. Each person who voices their con-

cern on climate change does so for different reasons. Whether it's the merchant marine, the snowboarder or the C.E.O., each wants the U.S. to meet this challenge. In its simplest form, the challenge of global climate change is about humanity. It's about ensuring the health of the environment and the success of future generations, and it is the challenge that we must not fail to meet.

I invite you all to visit our office in Washington in 302 Hart Building. Every Thursday morning we invite the entire state of Minnesota for breakfast, so if you happen to be there on vacation and the Senate's in session, join us. When you go in there you will find a drawing on the wall, and it's a drawing of a woman who's holding something in her hand. It's the planet earth, and the words read, "In my dream, the angel shrugged and said, 'If we fail this time, it will be a failure of imagination.' And then she placed the world gently in the palm of our hands."

We need imagination in Washington. We're a wealthy nation; we have the resources to do what needs to be done. We are a smart nation; we have the know-how to do what needs to be done. But we need imagination from people like all of you who are gathered here today to discuss this important issue. We need imagination from our leaders to move our country forward and build a future with shared prosperity and opportunity for all. You know, after almost nine months in Washington, I am an optimist. I am an optimist because I am humbled to represent the great state of Minnesota, because of all of you, and because you're here today to stand and speak up for a better world. You want this to be better, you know that it can be better, and you're willing to come together to do something about it. That's hope, that's optimism, that's imagination and that's how we are going to bring a real change to Washington and a real change to America.

Thank you so much. I enjoyed being part of your conference today, even though it was over videotape. Thank you, and have a great symposium.