

Dear Mr. President,

Over the past year, you've been a leader in trying to create a balanced and broadly supported energy policy that prioritizes clean energy. In light of the massive and ongoing environmental disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, we applaud your decision to put expanded offshore oil drilling on hold.

The images of oil burning off the Louisiana coast are rightfully disturbing to Americans in the same way images of the Cuyahoga River ablaze was almost exactly 40 years ago.

Facing what could become the greatest environmental disaster in our history, the American people are increasingly angry about the real costs of dirty and dangerous fossil fuels to the environment and the economy, not to mention the real costs in terms of lives lost.

This deadly disaster reminds us of the danger of our existing dependence on fossil fuels, and that the need for safer and cleaner energy alternatives has never been more clear or urgent. Add to that the risks to our soldiers and broader national security because of our dependence on oil and the time for a transition to a clean energy economy is now. America's continued dependence on dirty sources of energy represents a failure of political leadership over the last 30 years. Without leadership, the current debate in Congress over our energy future will represent another failed chapter to make the fundamental changes America needs.

Mr. President, you were elected, in part, based on a promise to everyday Americans that you would bring change to our energy future; a transition to a new clean energy economy that creates jobs, reduces our dependence on oil and makes our nation more secure by cutting greenhouse gas pollution. While in office you have taken many important steps to act on your vision of creating a clean energy economy including the enactment of stronger fuel efficiency standards; passing major new investments in clean energy; and directing the Environmental Protection Agency to tackle the threat of climate change.

But those steps alone will not be sufficient to realize the transformative change we all seek. Making good on your promise will require that you put the full weight of your office behind an urgent campaign to move America beyond dirty energy and to usher in a clean energy economy, while holding polluters accountable for the costs of their pollution

So, Mr. President, we ask you to urgently convene all stakeholders and lead the effort to craft a comprehensive clean energy and climate policy that will be enacted this year and will move America toward energy independence built on clean American power.

Sincerely,