

Statement of Senator Max Baucus, as prepared
Energy and Public Works Committee Mark-Up
11-5-09

Thank you Madam Chairman and my EPW colleagues.

John Steinbeck once wrote "I'm in love with Montana. For other states I have admiration, respect, recognition, even some affection. But with Montana it is love."

I love Montana. I love hiking up the Beartooths and watching the sunrise. I love looking at the pristine beauty of Glacier National Park, and the vastness of Makoshika.

I love talking with farmers in Glendive and boilermakers repairing a refinery in Laurel. I love enjoying the outdoors in Pryor and at the Big Horn.

And it is in these very places, talking with these very people, where the effects of climate change, and the effects of climate change legislation, are so visible. Running on the trails by my home in Helena, seeing the red forests destroyed by pine beetles or seeing sustained drought and increased wildfires, we feel the impacts of climate change.

That is why I am committed to passing meaningful, balanced climate change legislation. Legislation that will protect our land and those whose livelihood depends on it.

I want to thank Chairman Boxer and my colleagues for their hard work. At the beginning of this mark up I expressed a few concerns about this bill.

For example, I feel that the 20 percent mid-term target by itself is too high. That is why I offered an alternative that would create a 17 percent target with a trigger up to 20 percent, if other countries played by the same rules.

Additionally, I wanted to make sure this bill was right for our agriculture industry. I felt these changes would make the bill stronger and better for Montana and for the nation. Unfortunately, these concerns weren't able to be resolved, so I am unable to vote for this legislation.

While I am voting no on this particular bill, let me be crystal clear: as a member of the EPW and Agriculture Committees, as Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and most importantly, as a Montanan who wants our children and grandchildren to be able to enjoy the outdoors the way we can today, I'm going to work to get climate change legislation that can get 60 votes, get through the United States Senate, and signed into law.

Chairman Boxer, you have worked very hard and I know as we proceed forward we will be able to work closely together to craft a bill that will create jobs in Sacramento, California and Helena, Montana. We will craft a bill that will protect Yosemite and Yellowstone. We will craft a bill that increases our national security by decreasing our dependence on foreign oil. And ultimately, we will craft a bill that will secure America's economic and environmental future for generations.

Thank you.