



CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS
of Major American Jewish Organizations

The central coordinating body representing 50 national Jewish organizations on issues of national and international concern.



AJC American Jewish Committee
Global Jewish Advocacy



B'NAI B'RITH
INTERNATIONAL



July 21, 2010

The Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:
Dear Minority Leader McConnell:

In his June 15th Oval Office speech on the BP oil spill, President Obama argued for the need to reduce America's dependence on oil so as to limit the extent to which we drill for oil in risky places, such as the deep waters off our coasts. As our organizations have repeatedly emphasized, the Outer Continental shelf is not the only place where drilling entails risk. Our continued dependence on oil produced through drilling in nations whose interests are inimical to those of the United States and our allies opens our nation to added political and international danger at a time of turmoil and uncertainty, with enormous negative consequences for our economy, foreign policy and national security. **It is for that reason that we strongly support changes in U.S. energy policy that would reduce our dependence on oil, in particular foreign oil imported from hostile nations – and particularly urge that any Senate energy bill include the Open Fuel Standard, which has been introduced in the Senate as S.835 with bipartisan support, and which is included in a modified (and less satisfactory) form in the House climate bill (H.R.2454).**

We are concerned that the energy bill being prepared for presentation to the Senate fails to address in any meaningful way America's dependence on foreign oil. As we understand it, the bill's central elements (measures to reorganize the Minerals Management Service and to ensure that blowout preventers work in the future) do not reduce energy consumption. And, while the additional provision proposed for capping utility carbon emissions would reduce the burning of coal and natural gas, it can have no significant impact on oil consumption; since utilities use virtually no oil to produce electricity (oil was used to produce less than 0.7% of all electric power in 2009 and 2010). To address this crucial missing element, the proposed bill needs to focus additional attention on reducing the oil that America uses for transportation, since 71% of all oil is used by the transportation sector. The Open Fuel Standard is a quick, economical reliable measure to do so.

We seek the opportunity to meet with you before Senate consideration of the energy bill now in preparation to discuss the need for inclusion in the bill of this crucial measure.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Hoenlein

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Abraham H. Foxman
Anti-Defamation League

David A. Harris
American Jewish Committee

Daniel S. Mariaschin
B'nai B'rith International

Jack Halpern, Dennis F. Klein, Neil B. Goldstein
Energy Alternatives for the 21st Century

Cc: Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chair, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Honorable Barbara Boxer, Chair Committee on Environment and Public Works
Honorable John D. Rockefeller, III, Chair Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
Honorable Max Baucus, Chair, Finance Committee
Honorable Blanche L. Lincoln, Chair, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
Honorable Sam Brownback, Sponsor of S 835
Honorable Maria Cantwell, Co-sponsor
Honorable Susan M. Collins, Co-sponsor
Honorable Chuck Grassley, Co-sponsor
Honorable Amy Klobuchar, Co-sponsor
Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman, Co-sponsor
Honorable John Thune, Co-sponsor
Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Honorable John Cornyn