

**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
WASHINGTON

January 17, 2014

TO:

**Wm. Robert Irvin**, American Rivers, President and CEO  
**Robert Wendelgass**, Clean Water Action, President  
**Jamie Rappaport Clark**, Defenders of Wildlife, President and CEO  
**Trip Van Noppen**, Earthjustice, President  
**Maura Cowley**, Energy Action Coalition, Executive Director  
**Margie Alt**, Environment America, Executive Director  
**Fred Krupp**, Environmental Defense Fund, President  
**Eric Pica**, Friends of the Earth, President  
**Gene Karpinski**, League of Conservation Voters, President  
**David Yarnold**, National Audubon Society, President and CEO  
**Larry J. Schweiger**, National Wildlife Federation, President & CEO  
**John Echohawk**, Native American Rights Fund, Executive Director  
**Frances Beinecke**, Natural Resources Defense Council, President  
**Andrew Sharpless**, Oceana, Chief Executive Officer  
**Catherine Thomasson**, MD, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Executive Director  
**John Seager**, Population Connection, President  
**Michael Brune**, Sierra Club, Executive Director  
**Sandy Newman**, Voices for Progress, President

I am writing in response to your January 16 letter to President Obama regarding climate change.

President Obama understands that climate change poses a significant threat to our environment, to public health and to our economy. He believes it is imperative that we act to address these threats, and that doing so provides an opportunity for the United States to lead in the development and deployment of clean energy technologies needed to reduce emissions. For these reasons, the President has taken steps to address the climate change challenge throughout the last five years, including a issuing a bold *Climate Action Plan* in June of 2013.

The *Climate Action Plan* builds on major progress during the President's first term, including: historic fuel economy and greenhouse gas emissions standards for light-duty vehicles that will cut 6 billion tons of carbon dioxide pollution, cut oil consumption by 12 billion barrels of oil, and save consumer \$1.7 trillion over the lifetime of the program; energy efficiency standards for appliances that will cut pollution and save consumers and businesses hundreds of billions of dollars in the coming decades; historic support for renewable energy that has helped to drive down technology

costs and more than doubled generation of electricity from wind and solar. These steps by the Obama Administration have contributed to significant decreases in U.S. greenhouse gas emissions; 2012 emissions of carbon dioxide were at their lowest level the lowest in nearly twenty years.

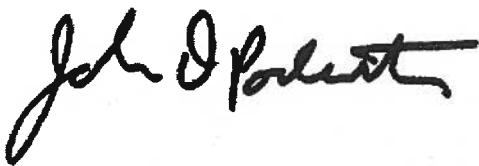
The Climate Action Plan outlined by President Obama in a historic speech at Georgetown in June of 2013 builds on these measures, and commits to additional steps to cut the emissions of carbon pollution, prepare the United States for the impacts of climate change, and lead international efforts to combat global climate change. The breadth of the plan makes it impossible to detail those steps in this letter, but key commitments to continue to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions include establishing the first-ever carbon pollution standards for power plants, a multi-sector strategy to reduce methane emissions, action to limit the use of HFCs and promote the use of more climate-friendly alternatives, additional DOE energy efficiency standards, and additional fuel economy and greenhouse gas emissions standards for heavy duty vehicles.

We have made significant progress in implementing the plan in the last seven months, and I attach for your review a recent report that details this work. However, significant work lies ahead in meeting the commitments outlined in the Climate Action Plan. In addition, opposition to key components of the plan remains. Last week, the White House had to fight off anti-environmental Appropriations riders, including ones that would have prevented the EPA from implementing regulations to reduce carbon pollution from existing power plants under section 111(d) of the Clean Air Act, and would have prevented the Administration from moving forward with Tier 3 vehicle and fuel standards. On the day your letter arrived, the Senate Minority Leader filed a Congressional Review Act resolution to overturn rules to regulate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from new power plants.

Given this context, I was surprised that you chose to send your January 16 letter to President Obama. The President has been leading the transition, to low-carbon energy sources, and understands the need to consider a balanced approach to all forms of energy development, including oil and gas production.

With respect to meeting the threats posed by a rapidly changing climate, implementation of the Climate Action Plan must and will remain the focus of our efforts. In the meantime, we will continue to welcome your advice, based on your very long experience on how to convince the American public of the need and opportunity to transform dirty energy systems to ones that are cleaner and more efficient.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John D. Podesta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John D. Podesta