



July 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chairman Barbara Boxer
Environment and Public Works Committee
United States Senate
410 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Leader and Chairman Boxer:

As the Senate begins to develop a comprehensive climate and energy bill, we urge you to ensure that the measure includes provisions to bolster environmental education in our nation's public schools. Specifically, we ask that at least one percent of the revenues from the auction of carbon credits be set aside for environmental education, with a special emphasis on comprehensive Pre-K through 12 environmental education as envisioned by the bipartisan No Child Left Inside Act (S. 866).

The No Child Left Inside Coalition comprises nearly 1,400 environmental, education, business, public health, and faith-based organizations at the national, state and local levels, collectively representing 50 million citizens. (Membership list attached) We speak for a diverse group of Americans who believe that advancing the environmental literacy of our Nation's Pre-K through 12 students is essential to:

- Prepare the next generation for the new "green" economy;
- Help the U.S. to achieve a sustainable future;
- Enhance student achievement in STEM and other core subjects; and,
- Establish a solid foundation for future actions as responsible citizens.

Two National Science Foundation studies and other reports over the last decade have called for changes and greater resources in our formal education system to advance the environmental literacy of the American public. International benchmarking measured on a recently-released Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) shows that the environmental literacy of U.S. students ranks near the bottom of the developed world.

Students now enrolled in our Nation's elementary and secondary schools must be provided with a solid understanding of environmental and energy issues – the tools they need to prepare them for challenges posed by climate change and jobs in the emerging new green economy. Teachers must be trained to provide high-quality instruction in environmental concepts and the connections between environmental, economic, and social factors.

Today, federal support for comprehensive, Pre-K through 12 environmental education remains ad-hoc, inadequate, and unavailable to most schools; and, increasingly, students have less of a connection to and knowledge of the natural world. By dedicating one percent of auction revenues for environmental education, including comprehensive Pre-K through 12 instruction, we can ensure the next generation of young Americans will have the knowledge to reap the rewards of a new green economy and tackle the complex environmental challenges ahead.

Your attention to this matter is appreciated and we look forward to working with you to address this issue and to ensure the enactment of comprehensive climate and energy legislation.

Sincerely,

Members of The No Child Left Inside Coalition