

# Legislative

# Update

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## Climate Debate Heats Up – Again

The climate change debate in Washington DC is intensifying. The Waxman-Markey bill, H.R. 2454, passed the House of Representatives last June. Since reconvening after the August recess, the Senate has been mired in discussions about both health care and financial reform. But, even though the Senate is focused on those very important issues, climate change is still on the radar screen.

S. 1733, known as the Boxer-Kerry “Clean Energy and American Power Act”, has now been introduced. There are also signs that the EPA is beginning the process of regulating greenhouse gases through a regulatory scheme. Last week, EPA issued a proposed rule to regulate carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generators and industrial plants. That came on the heels of final approval of a rule on economy-wide reporting of greenhouse gas emissions that is effective on January 1, 2010.

Clearly, it is evident that there is still a sense of pressure among many in Washington DC to press forward with sweeping climate change legislation and/or regulation. The question becomes when. We know that EPA is active. On the legislative front, the Congressional calendar is extremely busy, thus making time short for the remainder of the year. Several committees other than Sen. Boxer’s Environment and Public Works Committee will be weighing in on the climate debate in the Senate, but how long that will

take is another unknown factor. Senators Boxer and Kerry have indicated that they are still working on details of their legislation and that they will not convene hearings until the EPA comes to the table with an economic analysis of their bill. The public schedule announced last week calls for hearings to begin possibly on October 27th, with mark-up starting in early to mid-November. All things being equal, that timeframe is tenuous at best.

Additionally, there is a lot of activity behind the scenes, with the political aspects of this issue being negotiated at every turn. Once a final bill emerges out of Committee and is set for floor debate, there will need to be 60 votes in favor of the bill. Many specific details of climate legislation that are important to certain legislators in their home areas are becoming part of the closed-door discussions. Regional issues and economic impact are key issues to be addressed.

The Boxer-Kerry Senate bill continues to cause us concern. The bill does not provide for the kind of ratepayer protection that is needed in Indiana, or the Midwest for that matter. It still benefits the East and West Coasts, at our expense. In these continued tough economic times, make your voice count! [Contact Senators Lugar and Bayh](#) and let them know that we need to have a fair and affordable approach to climate change legislation. This is NOT it!