

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 13, 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama
The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to urge you to finalize strong carbon pollution standards for new power plants, and to pursue standards regulating carbon pollution for existing fossil-fuel power plants.

We have been working for years to address climate change, but the destruction caused by Superstorm Sandy has brought home the increasing costs of global warming for millions of Americans. Sandy destroyed tens of thousands of people's homes and businesses, and inflicted massive damage upon New Jersey's, Connecticut's, and New York's transit systems, infrastructure, and coastline that will take years to repair. Even when the damage caused by Sandy is repaired, the cost of infrastructure projects to mitigate future natural disasters caused by extreme weather events could run into the hundreds of billions of dollars. Superstorm Sandy, and the possibility of even more devastating storms in the future, clearly demonstrates the urgency of squarely addressing the causes of climate change and its effects.

America must transition toward a clean energy future which will create jobs, improve the health of all Americans, and cut global warming pollution. We welcomed your administration's policies that have seen a doubling of renewable energy generation, an increase in fuel economy standards to 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025, and the Administration's ongoing work to set carbon pollution standards for new fossil-fuel power plants. However, more needs to be done. Implementing standards for existing power plants would be a significant, commonsense step towards curbing carbon pollution, and is far less expensive than spending billions on infrastructure projects to mitigate the damage caused by climate change.

While Congress still needs to act on this issue, your Administration can take important steps today. In particular, setting carbon pollution standards for existing power plants is a necessity. By taking strong action now, the U.S. can achieve its goals to reduce carbon pollution by 2020. Confronting this crisis will help protect our communities from the increasing costs of climate change – not just the financial cost of rebuilding after extreme weather, but the human cost of putting families and communities back together in the wake of these tragedies.

We look forward to working with you and urge you to take swift action to set carbon pollution standards for existing power plants.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Christopher Murphy
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator