



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

APR 13 2010

Dear Mr. Sensenbrenner:

Thank you for your letter of February 25 regarding the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It is precisely because human influence on climate is such a significant and pressing concern that we must ensure the quality and reliability of all IPCC reports.

The overwhelming scientific evidence of human interference in the climate system has served as the basis for action by the U.S. government, along with local governments, businesses, civic action groups, and citizens. It is essential that these actions be informed by the best available science in all cases.

The errors that have been identified in several passages of the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report warrant our attention and concern, and we will work to ensure that the possibility of future errors is minimized. For this reason, we welcome the decision of the United Nations and the IPCC to request an independent panel to review the IPCC's work. This review and the recommendations stemming from it can help to minimize the prospect of errors in future reports.

At the same time, we think it important to note that the Fourth Assessment Report is, on the whole, a rigorous and balanced report. It offers the most comprehensive and inclusive assessment currently available of the literature on the physical science basis of climate change; on impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability; and on climate change mitigation, following strict procedures. Like previous IPCC Assessment Reports, the Fourth Assessment Report was produced based on a robust assessment of the available literature, and with the participation of a large number of widely respected volunteer authors and reviewers representing a broad range of scientific views and expertise. Successive U.S. administrations have worked hard to ensure that a slate of high quality U.S. scientists and experts play important roles in developing these reports. The United States government in 2007 accepted each

The Honorable

F. James Sensenbrenner Jr.,

Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming,
House of Representatives.

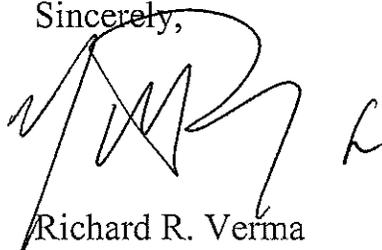
of the four volumes of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, and approved their Summaries for Policy Makers following an extensive domestic review that included an opportunity for comments by members of the U.S. scientific community and public.

We would also suggest that the specific errors you cite should be placed in an appropriate context. The evidence for climate change is reflected in numerous studies from a broad range of authoritative sources, whose findings are detailed not only in the thousands of pages of the IPCC, but also in thousands of articles in scientific journals, and in rigorous assessments performed by the United States National Academies of Sciences, the U.S. Global Change Research Program, and other institutions.

None of the errors that have come to light undermine the fundamental thrust of this large body of evidence, which serves to underscore that climate change is real and carries the risk of grave consequences if we do not move quickly to reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

We hope this information is useful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact us again if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Verma', written over a large, stylized, and somewhat illegible scribble.

Richard R. Verma
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs