

U.S. House of Representatives

## Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming

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**F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Ranking Republican**

**News Advisory**

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# Sensenbrenner Statement on Poznan- Copenhagen Select Committee Hearing

*Washington, D.C.*— U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Wis., ranking Republican on the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, made the following statement during today's hearing titled, "Roadmap from Poznan to Copenhagen—Preconditions for Success:"

"Global warming is a universal challenge. The logic supporting a global treaty is therefore obvious. But a global agreement without global commitments isn't a solution. With the United Nations' self-imposed deadline to replace the Kyoto Protocol approaching, we can't allow expedience to dictate a costly and ineffective response.

"Opposition to Kyoto was bi-partisan. In 1997, the Senate voted 95 to 0 to pass the Byrd-Hagel Resolution stating that the United States should not be a signatory to a treaty that does not include binding targets for developing nations or that would 'result in serious harm to the economy.' Because Kyoto failed on both counts, President Clinton never submitted the treaty for ratification.

"Kyoto's principal failure is its lack of inclusiveness. By only requiring commitments from 'developed nations,' Kyoto places no restrictions on a majority of countries, including 3 of the world's 5 largest emitters—China, India and Brazil. A treaty cannot reduce emissions without their participation. Even Al Gore conceded that binding commitments from developing countries are essential. But I was the only Member of the House to attend the UN climate conference in Poznan, Poland last December, and negotiations are not headed in that direction. I met with delegations from both China and India and I asked, point blank, 'Will you agree to mandatory emissions cuts?' Both countries said, 'No.'

"The Battelle Memorial Institute recently calculated that, based on business as usual projections, developing countries will produce more emissions than developed countries within 10 years. The emissions in the developing world are rising so rapidly, that

reductions from developed countries will be entirely offset by countries without binding commitments.

“A recent article in *Foreign Affairs* magazine quantified China’s growth:

By 2050 China is expected to have more cars than the United States. China’s grand-scale urbanization plans will aggravate matters. China’s leaders plan to relocate 400 million people to newly developed urban centers between 2000 and 2030. In the process, they will erect half of all the buildings expected to be constructed in the world during that period. That is a troubling prospect considering that Chinese buildings are not energy efficient—in fact, they are roughly two and a half times less so than those in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

“Rather than accept mandatory limits or increase its efficiency, China and other developing countries hope to sell offsets to developed countries. Accepting foreign investment is hardly a sacrifice comparable to binding limits on emissions, but beyond the unfairness, there is no way to guarantee that offsets will actually happen. The theory is sound. Instead of limiting emissions where they are most costly, companies can make the same cuts for less money abroad. The problems, however, are twofold. First, money that should be invested in our own economy is sent to China. Second, many of the offsets don’t happen.

“A recent project demonstrates the problem. Germany recently agreed to purchase offset credits from Chinese developers to build a new dam. The UN approved more than 16 million credits for the project. This legitimizes 16 million tons of emissions in Germany and generates tens of millions of dollars of revenue for China. The problem, beyond the massive transfer of wealth, is that developers began constructing the dam two years before applying for credits. According to the British *Times Online*, one UN official estimated that 20 percent of carbon credits failed to result in actual reductions.

“Karen Harbert, the President and CEO of the Institute for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Energy, will testify that the 2007 UN negotiations in Bali, Indonesia produced positive steps towards a new treaty. In Bali, developing countries agreed to actions that were ‘measurable, reportable and verifiable.’ This fits with the principle of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities’ that I support and that is fundamental to these negotiations.

“An agreement to handicap a handful of economies will not change economic realities. Consumers will still buy goods. The manufacture of these goods will result in the same emissions. America will simply outsource more emissions and more jobs.

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth C. Economy, *Foreign Affairs* (Sept 7 – Oct 7, 2007) (*internal omissions excluded*).

“Every country has the right, and every government the obligation, to pull its citizens from poverty and advance their way of life. The current global downturn starkly demonstrates that wealth isn’t a fixed pie—it can increase and decrease in absolute terms and American prosperity doesn’t come at the expense of the world. The entire economic world can grow. But all of that growth must be subject to the same limitations. We cannot self-impose costs while foreign markets grow freely. The result is too predictable—a long-term contraction of the U.S. economy coupled with the continued explosion of global emissions. In the face of intense pressure to find a solution, we can’t adopt a costly one that won’t work.”

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