

Mr. Sensenbrenner's Opening Statement for Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming hearing: "Massachusetts v. EPA: Implications of the Supreme Court Verdict"

June 8, 2007

Today we will hear more about the administration's plans to implement the recent U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in the *Massachusetts vs. EPA*. While I still have some questions as to whether greenhouse gases should be classified as a pollutant, the court has spoken and I'm pleased to see the administration is looking to enact some common-sense steps to comply with the court's ruling.

Just because the Supreme Court has ruled that carbon dioxide is a pollutant, it doesn't mean that the Environmental Protection Agency should hastily push regulations. As EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson points out in his testimony, the court's ruling only classified greenhouse gases as pollution, but the EPA still has to determine whether greenhouse gas emissions endanger public health or welfare. The EPA should be given time to evaluate this question, and it appears from Mr. Johnson's testimony that the agency has already begun its evaluation.

But regulation of greenhouse gases isn't, and shouldn't, be solely the responsibility of the EPA. In the case of greenhouse gases emitted by cars and trucks, the U.S. Department of Transportation must also be involved in developing these regulations, and I'm pleased that Administrator Nicole Nason, of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, is here as well to discuss that agency's plans, particularly in regard to corporate average fuel economy (CAFÉ) standards.

Both Mr. Johnson's and Ms. Nason's testimony mention regulations and I suppose that regulations will be a necessary part of any effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But I am heartened that both mention the importance of new technology in developing ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

As Mr. Johnson notes, alternative fuel sources such as cellulosic ethanol have the potential to produce greenhouse gas emission reductions that would far exceed any reductions that would come from CAFÉ regulations.

Additionally, we should be careful not to let CAFÉ regulations overtake safety regulation. Heavier cars are less fuel efficient, but also safer. Technology should also help us find the proper balance between safety and fuel economy.

As I have said many times, any proposal to reduce greenhouse gases must make use of advanced new technology like alternative fuels. Additionally, any proposal must also produce real benefits for the environment, protect jobs and the economy, and must require global participation, including China and India.