

Mr. Sensenbrenner's Opening Statement for Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming hearing: "After Bali – the UN Conference and its Impact on International Climate Change Policy."

Dec. 19, 2007

Last week, in Bali, Indonesia, a speaker at the U.N. climate change conference had some pointed comments about what must happen in order to achieve a meaningful agreement on global warming.

This speaker had first-hand knowledge of the political landscape in the U.S. The speaker said that international negotiators had to move away from failures that have hampered global warming talks since the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change held its first meeting in Berlin in 1995.

The speaker, referring to the so-called Berlin Mandate, said that meeting put in place an "inadequate process" that exempted China, India and other developing nations from taking significant steps to reduce emissions.

By exempting these nations, the speaker said, it made the subsequent Kyoto treaty impossible to ratify in the U.S. Senate. The speaker warned that negotiators in Bali must not make the same mistake of exempting China, India and other developing nations.

This speaker said that many in the U.S. were ready to move forward with substantial greenhouse gas reductions, but not, and I quote, “without the knowledge that other folks are cutting in a way that’s meaningful.” The speaker wisely said technology transfer and assistance with developing countries is crucial. To quote the speaker again: “The industrial world can’t do it alone.”

And while that speaker at Bali and I disagree on many global warming policy proposals, I am pleased that Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts grasps the importance of including China and India in the process.

Senator Kerry's statements are a breath of fresh air when compared to those of another American who spoke in Bali. While Senator Kerry laid out conditions that must be met in order for a global warming treaty to be approved by the U.S. Senate, another former presidential candidate simply laid blame for lack of progress at the feet of America.

But while Vice President Al Gore was calling America the "obstructionist" at the Bali conference, he failed to notice that other nations were joining the U.S. in opposing mandatory reduction targets in the Bali roadmap.

Mr. Gore also failed to acknowledge that China and India initially refused to commit to taking actions on their own to reduce emissions, before eventually accepting that they need to be part of the solution too.

I am very pleased that China and India agreed to language in the Bali roadmap for “nationally appropriate mitigation actions” that must be “measurable, reportable and verifiable.”

While there are some provisions in the Bali roadmap that raise concerns, I think that, overall, it’s a good agreement.

Negotiators have given policymakers all over the world the time to promote development of technology that will make emission restrictions achievable without damaging the economy and hurting jobs.

If China and India are willing to work with the international community, it is possible to develop a meaningful climate change treaty that creates real environmental benefits, protects jobs and the economy and advances technology. Without China and India, any global warming treaty would simply be an invitation for manufacturers to move their operations to these unregulated

economies. And then where would our economy and our environment be?

I opposed the Kyoto treaty from the start because I knew what we were getting into with that flawed agreement. Hopefully, this roadmap from Bali can start us on the path towards a more realistic and effective global emissions reduction solution.

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