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United States Senate

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The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Ernest Moniz
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Kerry and Secretary Moniz:

As you enter the final week of negotiations – and begin to work out the details of a final climate deal in Paris – we ask that carbon capture utilization and storage (CCUS) is appropriately considered as a carbon reduction tool and is included in any final policy to come out of the current discussions. Given the ambitious long-term emissions reduction goals that have been set by the scientific community, it is increasingly clear that CCUS will be needed in both the industrial and power sectors to avoid the impacts of climate change. There are currently 15 large-scale, operational carbon capture and storage projects around the world capturing about 40 million tons of CO₂ annually; however, with the International Energy Agency (IEA) estimating that CCUS needs to be capturing 100 times this amount for the world to meet climate goals, clearly additional progress is urgently needed to bring down technology costs, encourage financing of new projects, and drive better utilization technologies. We believe that international collaborative efforts, like the upcoming United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) conference in Paris, present an opportunity to lower the cost and shorten the timeline associated with deploying CCUS. We applaud the recently announced Mission Innovation and ask that the Administration take steps to maximize this and other opportunities to make a real commitment to the research, development, and implementation of CCUS technologies.

Some of the world's most prominent climate and energy organizations have identified the need for CCUS in combatting climate change. The former Executive Director of the IEA Maria van der Hoeven has emphasized that, because fossil energy will continue to make up a large percentage of the global fuel mix, "there is no climate friendly scenario in the long run without CCS." The IEA has also acknowledged that carbon capture and storage provides the only method of making deep cuts to emissions from the industrial sector, which currently accounts for 20% of U.S. emissions and roughly the same percentage of emissions worldwide. And the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has expressed serious doubts in its latest Assessment Report that the world can meet climate goals without CCUS, and estimated that doing so would increase the cost of mitigation by 138%. Clearly, addressing climate change requires a global, all-hands-on-deck effort to further the commercialization of CCUS.

We appreciate the leadership Secretary Moniz is showing on CCUS development in the international arena, including his chairmanship of the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum (CSLF) and his role in continuing the important work of the U.S.-China Clean Energy Research

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Center. These and other international collaborations have improved research efforts, allowed for sharing of best practices, and enabled the financing of future demonstration projects. We believe that the 21st session of the UNFCCC conference in Paris (COP21) and future international climate discussions will provide a number of opportunities to build upon the Secretary's successes in advancing global CCUS initiatives. At COP21 we request the U.S. Delegation advocate for:

- Providing a thematic funding window for CCUS in the Green Climate Fund and using other similar tools to highlight the eligibility of CCUS for these funds.
- Recognizing the role of CCUS as a climate mitigation technology when updating the U.S. Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) and encouraging other nations to do the same where appropriate.
- Finding ways in which the Financial Mechanism can be used to leverage private funding for CCUS projects, including through the Private Sector Facility.

We also recognize that Congress can play a role in facilitating international cooperation so as to maximize our finite RD&D budget for CCUS, reduce duplicative research efforts, and spur the financing of demonstration projects around the world, especially in developing nations. To this end, we request that you return from COP21 with specific legislative recommendations on how these goals can be accomplished.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senate



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senate