

April 2, 2007

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Fax: 613-941-6900

Re: Bill C-30

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

As Executive Directors of some of Canada's largest environmental organizations, we are writing to commend the work of the House of Commons legislative committee studying Bill C-30.

In clause-by-clause hearings last week, the committee incorporated many improvements to the bill, with the result that C-30 now represents a very significant piece of environmental legislation for Canada.

Amongst others, we support the following amendments to the bill:

- The addition of a "Kyoto-level" cap on greenhouse gas emissions from heavy industry, set in absolute terms and taking effect in January 2008;
- The establishment of a mandatory air pollution standard based on best practices and international standards;
- An amendment empowering the government to designate pollution "hot spots" in need of special attention;
- The removal of sections from C-30 that, in our opinion, could have threatened the legal basis for regulating greenhouse gases;
- The insertion of language to define "equivalency of effects", which helps avoid the weakening of equivalency agreements;
- A strengthened capacity to regulate the energy efficiency of appliances (energy-using products);
- Benchmarking of fuel consumption regulations for vehicles against leading standards in other jurisdictions;
- The addition of references to the Kyoto Protocol and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the bill's preamble; and
- Mandatory national targets for short-, medium- and long-term greenhouse gas reductions. It should be noted that the targets in Bill C-30 — a reduction to at least 20% below 1990 levels by 2020, and to at least 60% below 1990 levels by 2050 — fall short of the science-based targets we had recommended to the committee (25% below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050). However, the targets now in C-30 are considerably stronger than those proposed by the government in its Notice of Intent from October 2006.

The amended bill meets many of the criteria that our organizations set out in advance of the committee's work, which we released in a backgrounder published on Jan. 22, 2007 (enclosed).

Although it is not perfect, C-30 is now a bill that we strongly support. As currently written, it would represent a huge step forward for environmental protection in Canada, and constitutes an important leadership opportunity for your government.

We call on you to support this breakthrough bill as amended, and to work with the leaders of the opposition parties to pass it into law without delay.

Sincerely,

Bruce Cox, Greenpeace
Julie Gelfand, Nature Canada
Stephen Hazell, Sierra Club of Canada
Robert Mitchell, Sierra Legal Defence Fund
Ken Ogilvie, Pollution Probe
Marlo Raynolds, Pembina Institute
Sidney Ribaux, Équiterre
Mike Russill, WWF Canada
Rick Smith, Environmental Defence
Morag Carter, Climate Change Program Director, David Suzuki Foundation

