

La. Workforce Commission Sends Letter to EPA on Regulation of Greenhouse Gases

The below letter was sent today from LWC Executive Director Curt Eysink to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson:

December 22, 2009

Ms. Lisa Jackson, Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building Mail Code: 1101A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

RE: Regulation of Greenhouse Gases

Dear Administrator Jackson:

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) serves as the state's workforce development agency, ensuring that business and industry have a trained workforce that meets their current and future needs, allowing them to grow and create more job opportunities for our citizens. It is our belief that the rules regarding greenhouse gases that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is pushing forward will have significant impacts on the economy of our state and country and the job opportunities for our citizens.

Louisiana is home to significant petrochemical, refining, manufacturing, forest products, agribusiness and shipping industries.

Louisiana is the second largest refiner of petroleum in the United States and is home to 19 refineries. Louisiana's petrochemical industry manufactures one quarter of the nation's petrochemicals. We hold 11 percent of U.S. petroleum reserves and 19 percent of natural gas reserves, ranking us 2nd in the nation for mineral production.

Our state's location at the mouth of the Mississippi makes us a hub for much of the nation's industrial and manufacturing capacity. The Port of South Louisiana is the largest volume shipping port in the Western Hemisphere and 4th largest in the world. Louisiana ports handle nearly half of all American grain exports.

Louisiana's fishing industry is 2nd in the nation, accounting for 26 percent of all seafood landed in the country. The state is also among the country's 10 largest producers of cotton, sugarcane, yams, rice and nuts.

These industries are the backbone of Louisiana's economy, and as such, Louisiana would be disproportionately affected by GHG rules compared to the rest of the country. We also are a large national producer, which means any downturn in these industries resulting from the GHG rules could ripple through the rest of the country. For an area that is still recovering from hurricane damage, the far-reaching effect of these regulations could prove devastating.

In addition, the regulatory burden the GHG rules would place on our employers would also be significant, causing them to spend even fewer resources on labor in our state. Many of the Louisiana

jobs likely to be lost as a result of the GHG rules will simply move overseas and further hamper our ability to compete internationally. For a state that relies heavily on the very industries these regulations target, the effect on jobs could be significant, and not just for Louisiana.

For issues as critical to the nation as this, there must be a public debate that considers all facets of these regulations. The effects of these regulations are far reaching, well beyond the scope of the EPA alone. Therefore, we believe strongly that these issues must be debated by Congress rather than being addressed through EPA rules.

Gov. Bobby Jindal has worked hard to make Louisiana a business-friendly state, which we believe has contributed to Louisiana's relative strength during the recession. Our state cannot afford to reverse course now because of onerous rule-making.

We ask that you consider the issues presented in this letter and the impact that GHG regulations will have across the United States. At a time when the nation is dealing with record unemployment, we can ill afford policy changes that could trigger even more strain on employment.

We look forward to further discussion on the points raised in this letter and welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Curt Eysink
Executive Director

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