

Center Endorsement of the
Off Fossil Fuels for a Better Future Act

September 7, 2017

Dear Member of Congress,

At a time when study after study reveals the increasing urgency of acting rapidly to move away from fossil fuels and onto 100% renewable energy, we write to express our strong support for the Off Fossil Fuels for a Better Future Act (“OFF Act”) (Gabbard, D-HI).

This visionary legislation is the strongest climate bill introduced to date and recognizes that we must make massive changes to our energy system in the next decade if we are to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Additionally, the bill recognizes the need to place racial and economic justice at the forefront of the climate fight. Low-wealth communities and communities of color, including Native American communities, are being impacted first and worst by global warming right now. The bill addresses this reality by creating the Center for Clean Energy Workforce Development, which will create jobs, giving priority to disadvantaged communities, while transforming our energy economy, and putting us on a path to 100% renewable energy by 2035.

The OFF Act acknowledges the need for bold action in the next ten years by mandating a transition to 80% renewable energy by 2027, making it clear that clean energy can not include fracked gas or any dirty energy sources. We must act now and urge you to join in co-sponsoring this historic piece of legislation.

We are in a climate emergency. The threat of climate chaos from global warming is real and the evidence continues to mount. Today, global average temperatures are 1.0°C higher than before the industrial revolution, which spurred our now crippling dependency on fossil fuels. This warming has led to dramatic, planet-wide ecological and climatic changes. In 2014, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that “recent climate changes have had widespread impacts on human and natural systems,” including increasingly frequent violent storms, droughts, floods, acidifying and rapidly warming oceans, and altered growing seasons. While all communities will be impacted by impending climate chaos, those being hit the hardest are low income communities and communities of color.

In 2015, nations of the world met in Paris at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and agreed that preventing the planet from warming 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels “would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.” This will require aggressive action to reverse our dependence on fossil fuels and achieve 100 percent clean energy worldwide. And – we do not have decades to wait. We must act now in order to have a reasonable chance of avoiding the worst of climate chaos.

The OFF Act achieves this while creating thousands of job and promoting equity and justice by:

*Providing for a just transition with a focus on environmental and economic justice communities.

*Requiring 100% of electricity sold in the United States to come from clean energy by 2035, with an interim benchmark of 80% by 2027;

*Requiring 100% of car sales from manufacturers be zero-emission vehicles by 2035;

*Ending federal fossil fuel subsidies and putting a moratorium on new major fossil fuel projects;

*Placing a tax on offshore corporate income to help fund the renewable energy revolution; and

*Requiring elimination of fossil fuels without allowing for interim marketplace avoidance mechanisms like cap and trade that have proven ineffective in significantly reducing emissions.

In doing this, the OFF Act will stop fossil fuel projects, create tens of thousands of new jobs while transforming our energy economy, begin to address environmental injustices, and put us on the path towards the national mobilization necessary to address the climate crisis.

The climate emergency presents an existential threat to all people on this planet and time is running out. The OFF Act is a critical piece of legislation that will spur the necessary transition of our energy economy on a timeline that rises to the threat science tells us we face. We urge you to co-sponsor this important legislation and publicly and forcefully advocate for its passage.

Signed,

David C. Kyler
Executive Director
Center for a Sustainable Coast