

Dear Democratic Colleague:

We are writing to invite you to join us in our effort for the Democratic Caucus to champion a "New Apollo Project," intended to develop and deploy domestic renewable energy sources and conservation technologies for our country.

It is clear that the ideas we propose in the new Congress must be bold, must answer the most pressing problems faced by the nation, must be understandable, and must be unmatched by the Republican Party. This New Apollo Project fulfills those requirements for being a central tenet of our caucus's efforts, and is attuned with the American values of resourcefulness, ingenuity, creativity, and can-do attitude.

The New Apollo Project will marshal the resources of the federal government to provide a vision of how to solve the following challenges: 1) breaking our addiction to Mideast oil and thereby improving our homeland and national security; 2) how to address the threat of global warming; and 3) how to expand our economy and create jobs.

Specifically, the New Apollo Project will address the following high priority policy objectives:

1. Homeland & National Security

The Democratic Party needs to provide the nation with alternative homeland & national security ideas different in character than those now advanced by George Bush. If there is a lesson from the last election, it is that simply saying that we agree with George Bush on homeland security issues does not advance our electoral prospects.

Alternatively, in many areas of the country, resisting the efforts to make us even more militarily engaged in the Mideast also carries grave political risks.

The New Apollo Project offers a third way to enhance homeland & national security. It does not argue for or against a Homeland Security Department or regime change of any foreign government. It does argue that we can reduce the prospects of the Mideast embroiling us in decades of terrorism and war by adopting a dynamic approach to security.

This New Apollo Project provides a specific policy solution to a problem that nearly all Americans instinctively know - our policies in the Mideast are shackled by our addiction to Mideast oil that entangles us in a dangerous quagmire that now threatens our own security. The New Apollo Project will aggressively take us down the inevitable and only path of energy independence for our country - a robust renewable energy and conservation technology resource base.

2. Global Warming

The New Apollo Project provides an American answer to the problem of human contributions to atmospheric greenhouse gasses, which nearly all scientists agree are causing global warming. It does so in a way that is optimistic, growth oriented, and fitting of the "can do" character of the American people. It does not argue for or against capping CO2 emissions, or ratifying the Kyoto Protocol.

Since the industrial revolution, CO2 content in the atmosphere has risen 30% as a result of humans burning fossil fuels and we are currently adding over 1,500 million metric tons a year. 1998 was the hottest year since reliable instrumental temperature measurements began, 2002 the second hottest, and the 1990's was the hottest decade in 1,000 years. Polls consistently show that the public understands this problem - Americans have seen enough pictures of retreating glaciers, melting ice caps, and bizarre weather to know that something is amiss. President George W. Bush has acknowledged the problem, but has yet to propose a solution. The New Apollo Project will set the United States on a trajectory of stabilizing CO2 production in our country, and lead the world on this vital environmental, health, and world security issue.

3. Economic Growth

Democrats need to demonstrate that we are pro growth and that we have fresh ideas on how to create jobs in a high tech world. The New Apollo Project is a much-needed

economic growth initiative that will make the United States the dominant world manufacturer of high tech energy efficient equipment. According to a study by the California Public Interest Research Group, renewable energy plants create four times the number of jobs as traditional plants.

At this time, Japan leads the world in hybrid vehicle development, Denmark leads in wind generation technology, Canada is a leader in fuel cell technology production, Honda and Toyota have recently put a fuel cell vehicle on the road in Los Angeles, and the United States lags in Photovoltaic development. That these new technologies will compose a very large market in the future is inevitable - the only question that remains is which countries will reap the economic advantages of manufacturing them.

The New Apollo Project will also help advance rural development and diversify the agriculture sector by supporting such products as bioenergy, wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal. In addition, our plan can provide tax incentives for companies manufacturing these new technologies to locate in areas of the country in greatest need.

With only 3% of the known oil reserves in the world, the United States cannot become energy independent or measurably affect the world price of oil simply by drilling more within our borders. We can do so by calling upon the same sense of destiny and confidence in our technological talent upon which Kennedy relied on March 19, 1961 and develop alternative energy sources.

Over the next couple of months, we will be working with experts to develop a specific and quantifiable national goal for the New Apollo Project that will be challenging, attainable, and will capture the imagination of the American people.

We believe that a New Apollo Project along the lines described here will help define our new and assertive Democratic agenda, and that this effort should be a high and visible priority for our party. If you would like more information about this project, please contact us at any time, or have your staff contact Brian Bonlender (Inslee 56311). We hope that you will join us in this effort.

Sincerely,

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