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LARRY CRAIG

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CRAIG SOUGHT TO IMPROVE CLIMATE BILL

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Idaho Senator Larry Craig kicked off the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee markup of the Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act, S. 2191, by offering an amendment requiring scientific and cost certainty, and eventual participation of China and India in capping emissions; the amendment was defeated on a party line vote. Senator Craig filed 46 amendments to the bill, offering more than 20 during the markup, in an attempt to improve the bill and create a workable climate policy for the nation.

Although most Republican amendments were defeated along party lines, the Committee did approve Craig's Forestry Study amendment by voice vote without opposition. The amendment requires the U.S. Department of Agriculture's report on forestry and greenhouse management research to specifically include "harvested wood products" and "hazardous fuel reductions" and their value and allotments in a carbon mitigation program. As written, S.2191 had not included these important projects' values for reducing and storing greenhouse gases, and cleaning our air.

The rest of Senator Craig's amendments were defeated with party line votes, including provisions for adaptation, universities, offshore natural gas production, and Yucca Mountain. Craig said, "I am sorry that we were unable to implement reasonable changes to this bill. The American people will be disappointed that this misguided policy continues to move through Congress without significant protections for our economy and our way of life. If we are to take this issue seriously, we should now focus on other legislative options, like the Senate Energy Bill, that will protect our domestic industry, secure our nation's energy security, and protect our environment."

Craig and Senator Jim Inhofe, R-Okla., Ranking Member of the Committee, joined in concern for the bill's silence on the potential role of nuclear power in addressing climate change. Craig stated, "The Democratic majority is turning their backs on a proven, reliable, safe, and absolutely clean power source – nuclear. Bottom line: we cannot simultaneously sustain our economy and reduce carbon emissions without nuclear power. It must be part of the mix. The Next Generation Nuclear Plant emits no carbon and produces hydrogen, a necessary fuel for tomorrow."

While Chairman Boxer rejected almost any mention of nuclear power in the bill, Craig and others were able to defeat a Clinton-Sanders amendment to dispose of clean coal research. The Idaho National Laboratory conducts clean coal and sequestration research, and Wyoming has vast reserves of clean coal.

Extensive information on Craig's amendments and his past, current, and future actions on climate change are available on his website, http://craig.senate.gov/i_climate.cfm.