



NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

May 18, 2009

Hon. Henry A. Waxman
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I write on behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council to express our support for Section 332 of the American Clean Energy and Security Act, H.R. 2454, which adds provisions to Title VI of the Clean Air Act to regulate hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

HFCs are powerful greenhouse gases. The one currently in greatest use (HFC-134a) has 1300 times the heat-trapping potency of carbon dioxide. They are used in refrigeration and air conditioning, in insulating foams, and other applications. With appropriate lead-time, however, it is feasible to replace them in most uses with other compounds that make little or no contribution to global warming.

NRDC supports the ACES bill's provisions that establish a cap and phase-down schedule for HFC production and consumption. Title VI of the Clean Air Act is the appropriate vehicle for carrying out this phase-down. HFCs are closely related to other chemicals (CFCs and HCFCs) that are already effectively regulated under Title VI.

The phase-down schedule in Section 332 will achieve at least an 85 percent reduction in HFCs by 2033 – a deeper and faster reduction than provided for carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases under other provisions of ACES. Further, the HFC schedule is subject to acceleration in 2011 or later if EPA determines that sufficient alternatives are available. Section 332 also provides for a transition to auctioning the vast majority of HFC allowances by 2020, and for an escalating fee that applies in the interim. Finally, Section 332 authorizes use of the auction and fee revenue to support the deployment of advanced new technology, the recovery and destruction of old chemicals, and the implementation of international agreements to phase down these chemicals worldwide.

NRDC understands that Section 332 is also supported by the producers and users of these chemicals.

We thank you for including these HFC provisions in your legislation.

Sincerely,

David D. Doniger
Policy Director, Climate Center