

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 26, 2008

The Honorable Mike McConnell
Director of National Intelligence
Office of the Director of National Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20511

Dear Director McConnell:

Yesterday the Intelligence Community Management (ICM) Subcommittee of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming held a joint hearing on the recently completed National Intelligence Assessment (NIA) on National Security Implications of Global Climate Change to 2030. We appreciate having had the opportunity to discuss this assessment and the very good work of the Intelligence Community with Dr. Thomas Fingar, Dr. Matt Burrows and Karen Monaghan of the NIC and Rolf Mowatt-Larssen of DOE(I).

Members of both committees expressed concern that the NIA was issued as a classified document. We understand from Dr. Fingar, as well as from intelligence officers from the NIC who have met with us in closed briefings, that some of the contents are classified because of the references to the capacities of countries to cope with the anticipated impacts of climate change might cause embarrassment to those countries. We have also been told that other parts are classified due to the impact that their public release might cause within some countries, but no explanation was given as to how that would affect US national security.

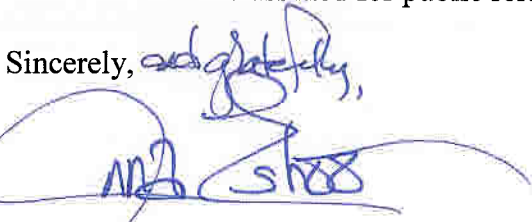
We respectfully request that the NIA be declassified. The assessment was produced entirely from open source material, thus its release would not compromise any sources and methods. Indeed, much of the NIA is already unclassified.

Further, Executive Order 12958, which governs classification of documents, states that "in no case shall information be classified in order to ... prevent embarrassment to any person, organization, or agency." In many cases, the US government provides international assessments that may cause embarrassment to other countries, for example the US government routinely publishes reports on subjects such as public corruption and human rights violations. We do not classify such documents because pointing out the shortcomings of such countries encourages them to make improvements. We believe the same would be true of the information in this NIA.

Most importantly, we have heard no reasons for maintaining the NIA's classification that would outweigh the value of releasing the document publicly. The NIA deals with public policy issues of great importance to policy makers at every level, as well as private citizens throughout the United States. The projected impacts of climate change have great bearing on

issues being debated by Congress. Also, information about the likely impact of climate change in other countries should be made available to help those countries prepare and direct their resources appropriately.

Therefore, we request that you reconsider the current classification given to this document, and make the NIA unclassified for public release in its entirety.

Sincerely, *and gratefully,*


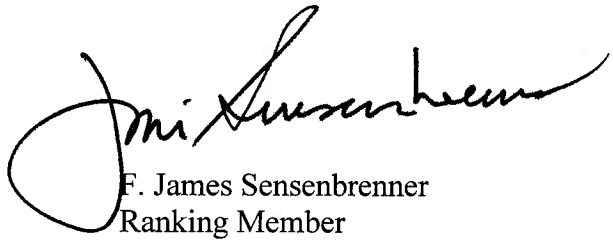
Anna G. Eshoo
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Intelligence
Community Management
House Permanent Select Committee
on Intelligence



Edward J. Markey
Chairman
Select Committee on
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Darrell E. Issa
Ranking Member
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F. James Sensenbrenner
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