

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 7, 2016

The Honorable John Kerry  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Gina McCarthy  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Secretary Kerry and Administrator McCarthy:

We write to commend the Administration for its continued commitment to fighting climate change, and urge that you take a strong position in the upcoming negotiations at the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol in Kigali, Rwanda in order to secure the adoption of an ambitious amendment to phase down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

In 1987, governments around the world agreed on the Montreal Protocol and committed to phase out the production of harmful substances responsible for ozone depletion. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) are two such substances commonly used in refrigeration and aerosol propellants. Cooperation among the now 197 signatories as well as American and international industries has dramatically reduced the use of ozone depleting substances. Thanks to international collaboration through the Protocol, net ozone depletion has now stopped and ozone regeneration has begun.

The most common replacements for CFCs and HCFCs are HFCs, which are safe for the ozone layer, but are potent drivers of climate change. In fact, HFCs are hundreds to tens of thousands times more potent greenhouse gases than carbon dioxide. Since 1990, the use of HFCs has increased 258 percent, posing a serious climate threat.

The negotiations in Kigali from October 8-14 provide an opportunity for all Parties to commit to an international phase down of HFCs. Significantly reducing the use of HFCs could avoid 0.5 degrees Celsius of warming by the end of the century. This represents a critical step toward remaining below 2 degrees Celsius temperature increase and meeting the goals of last year's United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP 21 agreement in Paris. We recognize the broad support from American and international industries for an agreement to reduce HFC emissions. Furthermore, we commend the Administration for leading a coalition of more than 100 countries calling for an ambitious amendment to the Montreal Protocol to fight climate change caused by HFCs.

To build on this momentum, we urge the U.S. negotiating team to take a strong position at the upcoming talks, and work to adopt an ambitious amendment to the Protocol to phase down the use of HFCs. With countries all over the world now acknowledging the danger of HFCs, we

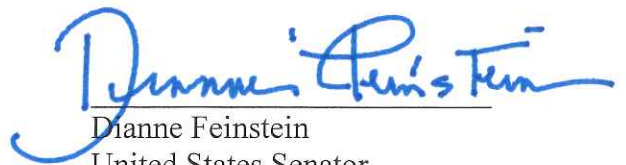
must ensure that all Parties are held to stringent standards regarding a phasedown plan. Specifically, we believe that the global growth of the production and consumption of HFCs should halt as early as possible, and should be followed by a rapid transition to more sustainable alternatives.

A successful agreement negotiated in Kigali is critical to help meet the goals agreed to in Paris, and we encourage you to take advantage of this important opportunity to create a more sustainable future. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Al Franken  
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



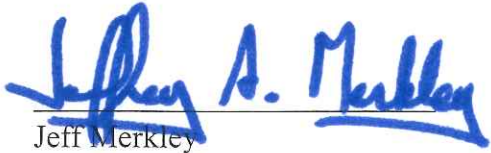
Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



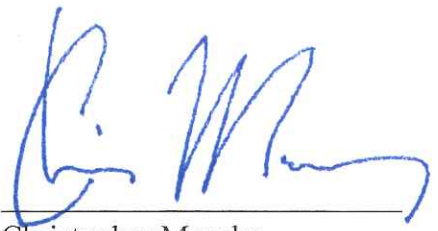
Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator



Jeff Merkley  
United States Senator



Christopher Murphy  
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator