



Sen. Murkowski charges that EPA endangerment finding endangers U.S. economy

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Washington, Dec. 14 – In a Senate floor speech Monday, Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) called last week’s U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ruling that CO₂ and other greenhouse gases are harmful pollutants “our worst option for reducing emissions.” She said she will file a Senate disapproval resolution to prevent EPA from using the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gas emissions.

“I remain committed to reducing emissions through a policy that will protect our environment and strengthen our economy, but EPA’s backdoor climate regulations achieve neither of those goals,” Murkowski said. “EPA regulation must be taken off the table so that we can focus on more responsible approaches to dealing with global climate change.” She said her action is necessary “to ensure that Congress, not un-elected bureaucrats, decides how our nation will reduce its emissions.” She added that “my resolution is not meant to run contrary to the Supreme Court’s decision” which triggered the EPA endangerment ruling and that “I am not interested in trying to embarrass the President, either here at home or on the international stage.”

Murkowski, the Ranking Member of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee, warned that “The EPA administrator’s move has thrown open the door to expensive and intrusive government regulation – as far from a market-based solution as we can possibly imagine. The endangerment finding is aptly named. It endangers jobs, it endangers economic growth, and it endangers American competitiveness, while setting the stage for backdoor bureaucratic intrusion into the lives of Americans on an unprecedented scale. . . This finding is supposedly rooted in concerns about the public health and public welfare, but what it really endangers are jobs, economic recovery, and American competitiveness. . . the finding opens the door to a sweeping and convoluted process that will require the EPA to issue economy-wide, command-and-control regulations. Once the finding is finalized, the EPA no longer has discretion over whether or not they impose regulations. As the administrator noted last week, the agency is now ‘obligated’ and ‘compelled’ to take action.”

Calling on the administration to give Congress more time to come up with its own climate change approach, Murkowski said “The EPA has taken these actions despite the fact that Congress is continuing to work on climate legislation. I find that highly counter-

productive, especially as our nation struggles to regain its economic footing. The endangerment finding must be stopped so that Congress can pass responsible legislation that is sound on its own merits, and not merely a defense against the threat of damaging regulations.”

Murkowski warned that “Congress is being threatened in a misguided attempt to move a climate bill forward. But this strategy is highly flawed because it assumes Congress will pass economically damaging legislation in order to stave off economically damaging regulations. That’s a false choice and it should be rejected outright.”

“This administration should be able to work with this Congress to pass needed, common-sense, and transparent reforms to our energy and environmental policies,” Murkowski said. “Until the administration stops playing Russian roulette with the economy and decides to reach across the aisle, however, it will be difficult to do anything but oppose the irresponsible decisions that are being made.”

Under Senate rules, Murkowski’s disapproval resolution would be referred to the committee of jurisdiction, which in this case is the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works chaired by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) – a committee which has passed climate change legislation that which awaits Senate floor consideration. If the committee does not report the resolution favorably within 20 calendar days, it may be discharged upon petition by 30 Senators. Once a disapproval resolution is placed on the Senate calendar, it is then subject to expedited consideration on the Senate floor, not subject to filibuster.

For the complete seven-page text of Sen. Murkowski’s Senate floor speech, go to: www.agri-pulse.com/uploaded/20091214H2.pdf.

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