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Businesses say strong climate agreement needed now to cut carbon, grow economy, protect environment

Congressional attempts to derail Paris agreement are bad for business, markets

PARIS (December 7, 2015) – Congress should not attempt to weaken an international climate agreement, two U.S.-based business groups representing more than 200,000 individual business leaders and companies urged in letters sent to Congress today.

“The time for obstacles and obstruction is over,” said Bob Keefe, executive director of Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2) **“As world leaders and business leaders alike have made crystal clear in Paris, we need action, and we need it now.”**

“Make no mistake, many business owners fear the impact of climate change on their operations,” said Richard Eidlin, Vice President of Policy at the American Sustainable Business Council (ASBC). **“From increased insurance costs and supply chain disruptions to the loss of entire companies due to extreme weather events, business is already feeling the cost of inaction on climate change.”**

E2 and ASBC and member companies made their comments from the UN COP 21 climate conference.

Negotiators are feeling growing pressure from the businesses community there to hammer out a strong deal. Private sector leaders argue a robust agreement gives international markets certainty and calms fears companies have about the rising economic costs of climate change.

Yet some in Congress are maneuvering to derail U.S. action in the climate talks.

“Congress needs to get in step with business,” said Amy Van Beek, an E2 member and co-founder of Ideal Energy, a solar business in Iowa that’s expanded from five employees to 30 in about a year. **“Addressing the central environmental challenge of our time is more than just a moral obligation to our children – it’s also a huge economic opportunity.”**

In Paris, the U.S. has a strong hand in the negotiations thanks to the Clean Power Plan. The plan sets the first-ever limits on carbon pollution from U.S. power plants and is our nation's biggest breakthrough yet in our fight against climate change.

E2's letter – which includes signatories who run the gamut from a retired U.S. Army general now working in the private sector in Virginia to Silicon Valley venture capitalists – is [linked here](#). ASBC's letter, [found here](#), says the “chance to create a robust, transparent, and binding agreement that cuts greenhouse gas emissions cannot be wasted.”

"The issue of climate change is a personal one for Ben & Jerry's," said Chris Miller, Activism Manager, Ben & Jerry's. **"We're a food company that sources ingredients from all over the world, including many regions profoundly at risk from a warming planet. While the risks are real to our company, those risks are not unique to our industry. That's why businesses are seeing the need to address climate change, not only in their own operations, but through mechanisms such as the Clean Power Plan."**

For more on how businesses have been speaking out about the need to emerge from the Paris talks with the strongest agreement possible, please see these resources:

- Full-page [Wall Street Journal ad](#) that ran Dec. 1 featuring E2 members' companies and Fortune 100 companies like Coca-Cola, Johnson & Johnson, and Kellogg's.
- Bob Keefe's Nov. 30 Huffington Post blog post: ["In Paris, businesses helping to lead the way on climate change"](#)
- Amy Van Beek's Dec. 4 [op-ed in Iowa](#) on why U.S. businesses are demanding climate action in Paris.
- [Video](#) of Christopher Miller, Activism Manager, Ben & Jerry's at COP21.

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ABOUT E2

Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2) is a national, nonpartisan group of business leaders, investors, and professionals from every sector of the economy who advocate for smart policies that are good for the economy and good for the environment. Our members have founded or funded more than 2,500 companies, created more than 600,000 jobs, and manage more than \$100 billion in venture and private equity capital. For more information, visit www.e2.org, www.cleanenergyworksforus.org, or follow us on Twitter at [@e2org](https://twitter.com/e2org).

ABOUT ASBC

The American Sustainable Business Council (ASBC) advocates for policy change and informs business owners and the public about the need and opportunities for building a vibrant, sustainable economy. Through its national member network it represents more than 200,000 businesses and more than 325,000 entrepreneurs, executives, managers and investors. For more information, visit www.asbcouncil.org.