



Dear Senator _____,

Jewish tradition prohibits unnecessary waste. We are taught that, even in times of war, one is not to destroy the trees of our enemies. (Deuteronomy 20:19-20) The Talmud clarifies that this prohibition against destruction applies to all resources, including oil. This commitment has led our community to advocate for energy policies that sustain our fragile environment, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and build a robust national economy. In fact, more than 120 organizations joined a Jewish community sign-on letter supporting the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007.

Our commitment to conservation and energy security was advanced on December 19, 2007, when President Bush signed the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (HR 6) into law. The bill has rightly been celebrated as the most important energy legislation in a generation. It raised automobile fuel economy standards for the first time in more than three decades and required that our automobiles run on clean, home-grown fuel. When fully implemented, it will dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and cut U.S. oil consumption by more than 1.1-million barrels per day – half of what we now import from the Persian Gulf and Venezuela. The bill also included critical advancements for our emerging green economy.

We are particularly excited about the various provisions in the Energy Independence Act that are intended to help jumpstart an emerging green economy. By requiring automakers to produce smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles in the United States, the Act increases the job security of tens of thousands of American workers who assemble and produce parts for these vehicles. The Act also includes critical incentives to help domestic automakers retool to build a new generation of more efficient vehicles. The Energy Independence Act also authorizes \$125 million in green-collar job training opportunities.

Unfortunately, without adequate funding, these provisions are meaningless. Senator Stabenow has spearheaded a green collar jobs initiative, securing \$2.6 billion in a recent Senate-passed Budget Resolution to finance the jobs that were envisaged by the energy bill. That provision is now being reviewed by the Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee and a "Dear Colleague" letter is being circulated to ensure that the full budget request is appropriated. Providing this funding will advance our national security by reducing our dependence on foreign oil. It will help the environment by supporting development of clean technologies. And it will help our economy by creating job security for our nation's auto workers and easing the transition to clean, green employment.

We urge you to sign the Green Jobs Initiative letter and help realize the full potential of the Energy Independence Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Kefer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jennifer" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Kefer".

Jennifer Kefer
Climate and Energy Program Coordinator

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish
Life

Hadar Susskind
Washington Director
Jewish Council for Public Affairs