

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 19, 2013

John Boreman, Ph.D.
American Fisheries Society
Bethesda, Maryland

Dear Dr. Boreman:

Thank you for writing. Few challenges are more urgent than climate change, and I appreciate your perspective.

For the sake of our children and our future, we must do more to combat climate change. Carbon pollution is putting our health and safety at risk, contributing to higher rates of asthma attacks and more frequent and severe heat waves, droughts, wildfires, and floods. The costs of these events can be measured in lost lives and lost livelihoods, lost homes and lost businesses, and hundreds of billions of dollars in emergency services and disaster relief.

We know that the 12 hottest years on record have all come in the last 15. Sea levels in New York Harbor are a foot higher than a century ago. In 2012, ice in the Arctic shrank to its smallest size on record. We can choose to believe that these trends are the result of coincidence, or we can accept the overwhelming judgment of science and act before it is too late. Our planet's future depends on a global commitment to permanently reduce the carbon pollution causing climate change.

In my first year in office, I set a goal of significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. And my Administration's actions have helped drive them down to the lowest level in nearly two decades. We are now on a path to a cleaner and more secure energy future—but there is still more work to do. That is why I have laid out a comprehensive plan to address climate change by cutting carbon pollution, preparing our communities for the consequences we cannot avoid, and leading international efforts to address global climate change.

My plan starts with changing the way we produce and use energy—using less dirty energy, using more clean energy, and wasting less energy throughout our economy.

Today, about 40 percent of our carbon pollution comes from power plants. But while we limit the amount of mercury, arsenic, and other toxic chemicals they pump into our air and water, there are no Federal limits to the amount of carbon pollution they release. That is why I have directed the Environmental Protection Agency to put an end to the limitless dumping of carbon

pollution from our power plants, and complete new pollution standards for both new and existing power plants. These changes will be developed in an open and transparent way; provide flexibility to different States with different needs; and build on the leadership many States, cities, and companies have already shown.

As power plants modernize and cut their pollution, we will do even more to boost clean energy production. Thanks in part to my Administration's investments in renewable energy—the largest of their kind in American history—the United States has already doubled our output from wind and solar, and thousands of Americans now have jobs as a result. I have set a goal of doubling electricity production from these sources again by 2020 so we can build on our momentum and create even more jobs.

My Administration will do its part to achieve that goal. The United States military—the largest energy consumer in America—will install 3 gigawatts of renewable power on its bases, generating enough electricity each year to power 750,000 homes. I directed the Interior Department to permit enough private, renewable energy capacity on public lands to power more than 6 million homes by 2020. And I set a new goal that the Federal Government will consume 20 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2020.

Another important step we can take to reduce carbon pollution is to waste less energy. My Administration already established the toughest fuel economy standards in our country's history, doubling the fuel efficiency of new cars and light trucks by the middle of the next decade. We built on that success by setting the first-ever standards for new heavy-duty trucks, buses, and vans. In the coming months, we will partner with truck makers to do it again for the next generation of vehicles.

We also need to unlock energy savings in our homes, businesses, and other buildings, which are responsible for about one-third of our greenhouse gases. That is why my Administration set new energy standards for appliances and continues to invest in energy upgrades for buildings. In the years ahead, we will encourage the private sector to make additional energy-saving investments.

As we work to reduce our own emissions, we must also forge solutions that ensure other countries do the same. My Administration led international climate negotiations that produced the first set of national greenhouse gas reduction commitments by all major developed and developing countries, the most robust transparency system for reviewing commitments to date, and important progress on global climate preparedness. At the same time, we have launched international initiatives to promote clean energy, energy efficiency, and reductions in greenhouse gas pollution. Moving forward, we will redouble our efforts to engage our international partners in taking concrete action and reaching a new global agreement that is ambitious and inclusive.

These measures will drive meaningful progress. We could do even more if Congress put aside politics and pursued a bipartisan, market-based solution to climate change, or stopped awarding \$4 billion a year in oil and gas subsidies to an industry that has never been more profitable. But this is a challenge that does not pause for partisan gridlock, and neither will my Administration.

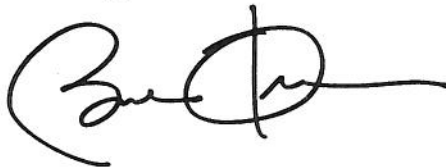
Finally, while we move quickly to reduce carbon pollution, we must also prepare for the consequences of climate change we cannot avoid. Federal agencies are working with communities to ensure our economy, infrastructure, and natural resources are resilient to extreme weather and other impacts of climate change. We are partnering with States, cities, and tribes to prepare for droughts and floods, strengthen critical infrastructure, reduce wildfire risk, and protect natural storm barriers like dunes and wetlands. We are also providing actionable scientific information and technical assistance to help cities and towns assess risk, so we save lives and do not waste money building structures that cannot withstand the next storm.

No single step can reverse the effects of climate change. But as a Nation, we have a moral obligation to act—not just for ourselves, but for future generations. This is not just a job for politicians. We need you to educate your classmates, your colleagues, your parents, and your friends and tell them what is at stake. We need people to speak up for the facts and broaden the circle of those who are willing to stand up for our future.

My Administration is making a serious, sustained commitment to address climate change. I encourage you to learn more about my Climate Action Plan at www.WhiteHouse.gov/Climate-Change.

Thank you, again, for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be Barack Obama's signature, consisting of a large 'B', a stylized 'O', and a long horizontal stroke.