



STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

FACSIMILE NO.
410-576-7036

WRITER'S DIRECT DIAL NO.
410-576-6311

April 25, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

Forty-seven years ago, 20 million Americans came together to raise alarm about the health and sustainability of our environment. In the wake of a massive oil spill and growing concern about polluting power plants, toxic spillage into waterways, wildlife extinction and other harms to the environment, that first Earth Day united Americans of all stripes – Republicans and Democrats, business and labor, the old and young in cities and on farms. This groundswell ushered in the passage of the landmark Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts, and the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

As we commemorate the 47th anniversary of that first Earth Day, we confront threats to our planet greater than ever envisioned by those who sounded the alarm almost half a century ago. Climate change, if left unchecked, will lead to global environmental dislocation and disaster on a scale we likely cannot imagine. Yet at the same time, we have reason to be hopeful. The Paris Agreement on climate change, negotiated under American leadership and ratified by the vast majority of the world's countries, has the potential to achieve a reversal of our current trajectory.

Thus, the undersigned state attorneys general urge you in the strongest terms to maintain and reconfirm the United States' commitment to this groundbreaking agreement. As the harmful environmental impacts of climate change continue to escalate, we remained determined to continue rigorous enforcement of environmental laws within our states. Yet the greatest challenges we face transcend state lines and national boundaries. The Paris Agreement, by securing commitments from countries the world over, reflects this collective interdependency and constitutes an unprecedented global effort to address a problem threatening the well-being of everyone on Earth. The United States showed exemplary leadership in the years-long effort to secure the Paris Agreement, and our Nation should continue to lead by fulfilling its promise to abide by and implement this historic accord.

Climate change poses multiple threats to our nation and to the world. First, it is a danger to our national security. As our own Department of Defense has written:

“The impacts of climate change may cause instability in other countries by impairing access to food and water, damaging infrastructure, spreading disease, uprooting and displacing large numbers of people, compelling mass migration, interrupting commercial activity, or restricting electricity availability . . . These developments could undermine already-fragile governments that are unable to respond effectively or challenge currently-stable governments, as well as increasing competition and tension between countries vying for limited resources. These gaps in governance can create an avenue for extremist ideologies and conditions that foster terrorism.”¹

Second, climate change is a threat to our economy. According to a 2015 EPA Report, in the absence of action to limit greenhouse gas emissions, the United States stands to lose \$180 billion because of drought and water shortages, \$200 billion because of 12,000 deaths from extreme heat and cold, \$2.6 to \$3.1 billion from the impact of extreme drought on American farmers, and \$940 million to \$1.4 billion from the impact of lost forest due to wildfire....”²

The severity of this economic threat is not lost on our business community. Over one thousand companies have expressed their “deep commitment to addressing climate change through the implementation of the historic Paris Climate Agreement” and their belief that doing so “will create jobs and boost U.S. competitiveness” by spurring investment in “clean energy.”³ Even major energy companies want the United States to continue honoring the Paris Agreement.⁴ Far from being “bad for business,” the framework created by the Paris Agreement promises to help governments and industries focus their efforts on the steps necessary to minimize harmful emissions, while simultaneously encouraging innovation that will benefit the economy.

Finally, climate change is a threat to the health and well-being of the American people. It has already caused rising seas and increased coastal flooding, more frequent and destructive storms and heat waves, longer and more damaging wildfire seasons, widespread forest death, costly adverse health impacts, increased pressure on groundwater resources, risks to our electricity infrastructure and food supply, and the destruction of coral reefs. The human and financial risks and costs are great, and they are accelerating.

¹ “Pentagon Report: U.S. Military Considers Climate Change a 'Threat Multiplier' that Could Exacerbate Terrorism,” News Week (Oct. 14, 2014), <http://www.newsweek.com/pentagon-report-us-military-considers-climate-change-immediate-threat-could-277155>.

² <https://www.epa.gov/cira/downloads-cira-report>.

³ “Business Backs Low-Carbon USA,” <http://www.lowcarbonusa.org> (last visited April 18, 2017).

⁴ Matt Egan, “Why Big Oil wants Trump to stay in Paris climate deal,” CNN Money (April 18, 2017), <http://money.cnn.com/2017/04/18/investing/big-oil-paris-deal-trump/>.

One of the remarkable achievements of the Paris Agreement, in recognition that problems long in the making demand long-term solutions, was to secure commitment to bold action for benefits that will unfold over time. We owe to future generations our fidelity to that foresight and long-term commitment. We ask, in what will require strong and sustained leadership, that you reaffirm the United States' pledge to fulfill its responsibilities under the Paris Agreement. The well-being of our planet, the ability of our United States to continue to thrive and make progress, and the future of our children and grandchildren depend upon it.

Sincerely,



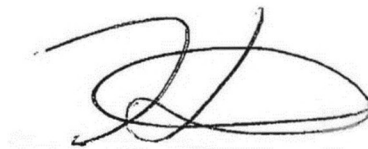
Brian E. Frosh
Maryland Attorney General



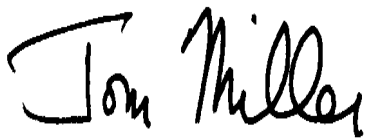
George Jepsen
Connecticut Attorney General



Matthew P. Denn
Delaware Attorney General



Karl A. Racine
District of Columbia Attorney General



Tom Miller
Iowa Attorney General



Janet T. Mills
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Maura Healey
Massachusetts Attorney General



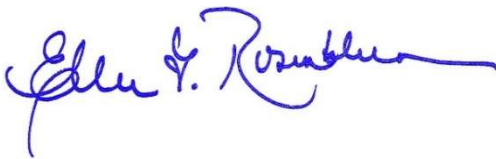
Lori Swanson
Minnesota Attorney General



Eric Schneiderman
New York Attorney General



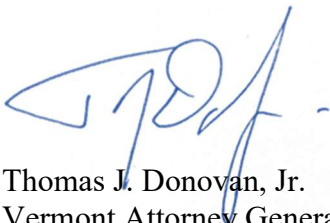
Josh Stein
North Carolina Attorney General



Ellen F. Rosenblum
Oregon Attorney General



Peter F. Kilmartin
Rhode Island Attorney General



Thomas J. Donovan, Jr.
Vermont Attorney General

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Talauega Eleasalo V. Ale
American Samoa Attorney General