



April 12, 2017

The Honorable Rex Tillerson
Secretary, U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Tillerson:

The Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE) would like to express its support for the continued participation of the United States in both the Paris Agreement on climate change and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The reasons are simple and clear: the engagement of the United States government in the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC will benefit American businesses and protect American jobs.

The BCSE is a coalition of major American companies and trade associations from the energy efficiency, natural gas and renewable energy sectors. The BCSE was established in 1992 by corporate executives with the vision that an integrated, diverse, low-carbon energy portfolio for the United States would be the backbone of a secure, reliable and affordable energy economy for the country. BCSE members are integral to the American economy, providing solutions that support not only the power sector but also the aerospace, aviation, construction, telecommunications and transportation sectors.

The BCSE has been an active business observer at the UNFCCC since its founding and has sent over 60 delegations in the past 25 years to international climate change and sustainable development conferences. Over this period, the coalition has witnessed a steady growth in the engagement of U.S. businesses in the inter-governmental process and can attest to the economic opportunities that result from participation.

The Economic Opportunity

Over 3 million well-paying U.S. jobs are supported by the energy efficiency, natural gas and renewable energy industries.¹ During the past decade, the market expansion of these energy sources and technologies has provided for greater energy diversity, self-reliance and security for the United States. With these changes, the U.S. economy has become more energy productive and efficient and American consumers are benefitting from lower energy costs.²

These same American industries, which create jobs at home, are the suppliers of the technologies and solutions that other countries are incorporating into their energy infrastructure and planning. The UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement are policy drivers behind this market demand. The United States must protect the ability of American companies to compete in these international markets, and to safeguard decades of U.S. technology investments.

U.S. diplomatic engagement in these policy arenas, supported by U.S. industry, will ensure that appropriate American technologies are utilized by countries that are building and diversifying their energy resources and infrastructure.

¹ BCSE Press Release, "[Over 3 Million in U.S. Now Work for Clean Energy](#)," (February 2017).

² BCSE and Bloomberg New Energy Finance, "[Sustainable Energy in America Factbook Executive Summary](#)" (February 2017).

By 2030, it is estimated that the global demand for clean energy will become a \$1 trillion annual market.³ The U.S. government, in partnership with the private sector, must work to ensure that the American companies that manufacture and provide these technologies and services are poised to lead and capture a significant part of that market. This market strength will result in additional jobs and investments in the United States, benefitting American businesses and American workers.

Importance of American Diplomatic Leadership

We must protect the competitiveness of American companies by maintaining a seat at the diplomatic table when key energy, environment and security issues are being discussed. Being present is required in order to get the best deal for U.S. manufacturing and technology industries. In the BCSE's 25 years of experience, we have seen the effectiveness of policy decisions enhanced when the private sector is able to contribute to all stages of the public decision making process. We have also seen U.S. business interests protected and a fair and level playing field ensured, but this will only happen if the United States is in the room.

Establishing rules to implement the Paris Agreement by 2018 is an important process during which BCSE member companies need to have constructive representation by the United States government. This representation is necessary to guarantee fairness, transparency and clarity in the rules around climate mitigation, adaptation, finance and technology actions, and the establishment of new market mechanisms. We also call upon the United States government to remain engaged in the climate negotiations in order to protect the intellectual property rights (IPR) of American companies and to keep IPR issues out of the climate agenda. American companies have innovations and technological advantages that require this IPR protection to support their business plans and daily operations.

The Council is also concerned that any back-tracking on U.S. commitments to the Paris Agreement or UNFCCC could induce negative market outcomes for U.S. companies that are doing business abroad, such as retaliatory trade policies reducing market share for U.S. products, preferential sourcing and procurement practices by governments that favor other countries, and consumer boycotts of U.S. goods and services.

The Business Council for Sustainable Energy, on behalf of its 53 corporate and trade association [members](#), strongly encourages the United States government to remain engaged in both the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC, in order to protect the economic interests of the American economy and the diplomatic standing of the United States in the global community.

The Council requests a meeting with you and your staff to discuss these perspectives. Please contact Laura Tierney (ltierney@bcse.org) at the BCSE to follow-up on this request.

Sincerely,



Lisa Jacobson
President, Business Council for Sustainable Energy

³ International Energy Agency, *Energy Technology Perspectives 2012: How to Secure a Clean Energy Future* (Paris: 2012).