

Environmental groups object to additional energy funding

Feb. 3 -- While environmentalists support green power initiatives funded as part of the \$825 billion economic stimulus package passed by the House, they are raising objections to additional energy funding that has been added in the Senate.

Physicians for Social Responsibility, Earthjustice, Greenpeace, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Sierra Club and more than a dozen other environmental and advocacy groups have sent a letter to senators objecting to provisions added by the Senate Appropriations Committee that would provide funding for nuclear and coal energy.

"These dollars being shoveled to the coal and nuclear industries will have no stimulative effect," said Michael McCalley, executive director of Physicians for Social Responsibility. "Instead, they will promote dirty and dangerous power sources while increasing the public deficit with no beneficial returns."

The advocacy groups object to \$50 billion in loan guarantees the bill would make available to the nuclear energy industry, \$2 billion for "near zero emissions" coal power plants, and \$1 billion for the Department of Energy's Clean Coal Power Initiative.

The letter, dated Feb. 2, urges senators to reject this portion of the stimulus package.

Meanwhile, a second letter written by a broad coalition of labor and environmental groups as well as businesses and electric utilities urges Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., to include additional funding in the stimulus package for energy efficiency investments. The letter notes the Senate version of the stimulus bill sets aside less than \$10 billion for the purpose -- less than one-half the amount contained in the House bill.

Contact Waste & Recycling News senior reporter Bruce Geiselman at 330-865-6172 or bgeiselman@crain.com