

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today urged Congress and the President to take meaningful action on the issue of global warming at the House Science and Technology Committee today.

Authors of the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, which was issued last week, testified before the committee today.

The New York Times reported earlier this week, "In a grim and powerful assessment of the future of the planet, the leading international network of climate scientists has concluded for the first time that global warming is 'unequivocal' and that human activity is the main driver, 'very likely' causing most of the rise in temperatures since 1950." [Source: New York Times, Feb. 4, 2007]

Dr. Kevin Trenberth, a lead author of the report, reiterated that warning today, and told the committee, "Warming of the climate system is unequivocal and it is 'very likely' to get much worse."

Mitchell urged action on global warming and issued the following statement for the record:

"Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

"I think one of the things the American people are hoping from this Congress is for Democrats and Republicans to work together to take the threat of global warming to our environment and our national security seriously.

"We are watching our planet rapidly change before our eyes. Once majestic ice caps are melting. Weather patterns are changing in very troubling ways. The temperature of our atmosphere is on the rise. The intensity of rains and drought are more extreme. Hurricanes, such as Katrina, are becoming more powerful, and more deadly.

"The scientific evidence that global warming exists - and that humans are largely responsible for the change in our climate - is overwhelming.

"The report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change - which we are hearing more about today - continues to confirm our fears about global warming.

"I hope that as the American people and the international community continue to learn about this report and the effects of global warming, our renewed interest in the topic will turn into action.

"The United States is the world leader in the emission of greenhouse gases. That means we have a moral obligation to lead the world to a solution.

"I believe that America's ingenuity, and our unique spirit can be an incredible asset in this cause. Our action on global warming can also help restore our authority as a respected global

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leader.

"Developing sound policy on global warming - and investing in new technologies and clean energy - can help grow our economy too.

"This Congress, the President and the American people have a responsibility, and I hope that we re-dedicate ourselves to meeting that responsibility."

In a related matter, Mitchell voted in favor of H.R. 547, the Advanced Fuels Infrastructure Research and Development Act, which passed the House overwhelming. The legislation works to move the United States closer to energy independence by making bio-fuels more affordable and accessible to retailers and consumers.