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To: President George W. Bush
cc: US Congress
State Governors
Presidential Candidates
UN Secretary-General
General Public

November 20, 2007

Subject: **Global Warming Solution:**
Grow Kenaf to Absorb Carbon Dioxide and Produce Cellulose Based Gasoline

Dear Mr. President:

I know that for this to reach your desk you probably must be thinking what new insurmountable complex, insidiously evil problem do I have to solve now? How about some good news for a change? We can stop global warming by planting kenaf – a plant that is high in carbon dioxide (CO₂) absorption and which grows surprisingly fast. Use kenaf to make paper, construction products and also biofuel.

I have a plan that has the potential to offset the United States' annual share of greenhouse gases that contributes to global warming. If the plan works as anticipated, there should not be any significant costs to the business sector or any huge capital investment by the government. In fact the plan should stimulate new private sector activities and investment.

The planet's existing plants and trees absorb their share of the carbon dioxide, as is their natural function, but humanity adds an additional 3.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere annually that is troublesome and accelerates the global warming. The United States accounts for 25% of the annual global carbon dioxide output – about 882 million tons. If we think of carbon dioxide as plant food instead of pollution we only need to plant more plants to absorb the extra carbon dioxide and thereby curb global warming. Kenaf, a fast growing plant in the hibiscus family, has been identified as a promising best choice. Per some scientists, it absorbs 2 to 3 times the carbon dioxide as rainforests and 3 to 8 times as much as a typical tree! We would need to plant 118 million acres (about the size of California) to absorb our share of CO₂.

Over the last 40 years the USDA has heavily researched kenaf regarding how to grow it, the expected yields and what products can be made from it. But recently kenaf has been looked at as a biofuel. This is relatively new technology, but the insider view looks promising that we could get 60 gallons of gasohol from every ton of dry kenaf. Kenaf, when farmed, yields 6 tons (or more) per acre = 360 gallons of gas. We use 146 billion gallons of gas per year. We would need to grow 405 million acres of kenaf (about the size of Alaska) and we have a carbon neutral footprint as well as enjoying being totally independent on foreign oil

At \$3.00 per gallon, the farmer, refinery, and distributor can all make a decent profit. Our economy would grow, keeping our dollars at home, employing our own people and ending our

dependence on foreign oil. It makes better sense to use a non-food crop like kenaf to make ethanol as well. Let's keep the corn in the cereal boxes and not in the gas tanks. Using biofuel makes us carbon neutral regarding our gasoline usage.

To completely eliminate our contribution to global warming we have to grow 118 million acres. I realize that this is a lot of land but consider that the area of the US is 2.3 billion acres we can find the land. This 118 million acres is only 5.13% of our total land. Figuring out where to plant the additional 405 million acres for biofuel is going to take some creativity. But kenaf isn't just growing for the sake of absorbing CO₂— it is potential paper, building products and fuel.

One of my scientist friends has grown kenaf in the deserts of Egypt with very high yields. Can we do the same with our desert land? Yes, if you have the water. He drip irrigated it with added nutrients and the kenaf plants flourished. Because water is presented as a barrier, I presented the argument that the planet is 2/3 water and we just have to roll up our sleeves and get creative about it and find a solution. I said money is not going to be the problem, as this is a matter of national security. He agreed it could be done. Other countries have done it, we can, too.

A good place to start is for you to appoint a Kenaf Czar who would be in your cabinet. I thought each state could then appoint a State Kenaf Czar and together they could figure out just how much kenaf could be grown in each state and see what we get for a total.

For starters, I would suggest growing kenaf along the interstate highways. I have crunched some numbers (see documentation section) and made suggestions for growing kenaf along the highways that makes sense for their review.

In closing I know that there are many problems and requests on our government's plate, but I believe that citizens are now more concerned about Global Warming than previously and would welcome your attention to it. Most of the entrepreneurs of the new technology regarding kenaf-related products are dying on the vine due to lack of start-up capital. One of the principals in a biofuel company I know about has stated to me that they can use kenaf and they are currently under-funded. The paper companies that could use kenaf are not making it due to lack of start-up capital. I think we should definitely figure out a way to guarantee loans to these companies so that they have the funds to get started and use the kenaf that we could grow. This funding should be in the form of guaranteed loans, as I believe the private sector will make plenty of money to pay back these loans. I would hope that we could help them get started and fast track their funding as this is a matter of utmost national security. We also can avoid the later staggering financial demands to help the millions displaced by the effects of global warming if we act now. The dire predictions by the scientists look real enough.

Let's focus on solutions that don't burden our economy with a tax, but let's stimulate the economy and implement solutions that we can control. Asking people to turn down their thermostats and recycling are good environmental practices, but, let's face it, they will not stop global warming. We need something that will really work, not just a Band-Aid.

See **Documentation** section for my sources, calculations, and a suggested beginning **Implementation Plan** for the President, Congress and Governors attached.

Thank you for your time in reading all this and for your service to our country.

Sincerely,

Bill Loftus