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**Congressional Bill Introduced for "Quick Action" Against Global Warming:  
Black Carbon Legislation Would Give  
Beleaguered Arctic Ecosystem a Chance to Survive**

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Today the Center for Biological Diversity, Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development, Defenders of Wildlife, and Earthjustice applauded Rep. Jay Inslee's (D-WA) introduction of federal legislation that would reduce domestic and global emissions of black carbon, or soot, which is a powerful global warming agent and public health hazard. Recent scientific studies on black carbon demonstrate that reducing emissions of this short-lived pollutant can bring about near-immediate climate mitigation, that governments possess the technological and economic ability to reduce black carbon pollution, and that such reductions will also result in significant public health benefits. Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT) and Mike Honda (D-CA) are original co-sponsors of the bill.

“We applaud Congressman Inslee, who along with Chairman Waxman and Senator Carper has been a true leader on getting attention focused on this crucial but often neglected warming agent,” said Bill Snape, senior counsel with the Center for Biological Diversity. “While only a fraction of bills introduced ever become law, this one we predict will be signed by the President. The central question is whether we will move quickly enough on black carbon and other greenhouse pollutants to prevent catastrophic damage from global warming.”

“The great promise of this bill is the potential to reduce warming quickly,” said Durwood Zaelke, president of the Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development. “We continue to observe harmful effects from the significant warming that has taken place, and past emissions have already committed the planet to additional warming in the coming decades. Reducing emissions of short-lived climate forcers such as black carbon is the only means of minimizing warming in the short term, so these actions are essential complements to reducing carbon dioxide emissions.”

The Inslee black carbon bill seeks to accomplish three fundamental actions: 1) Require a black carbon assessment and abatement report by the Environmental Protection Agency within a year of enactment; 2) Require final black carbon regulations by the Environmental Protection Agency within two years of enactment; and 3) Mandate that the State Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other agencies seek to reduce black carbon pollution internationally through foreign assistance and the growth of U.S. clean technologies abroad.

As the Inslee bill indicates, the atmospheric lifetime of black carbon is less than two weeks, so reducing emissions will have immediate effects. Moreover, black carbon has a particularly negative impact on bodies of snow and ice such as those in the Arctic ecosystem, which has suffered record losses of summer sea-ice over the past few years. When it falls onto ice or snow, after previously releasing solar radiation as heat in the atmosphere, black carbon darkens these

surfaces, reducing their reflectivity and accelerating melting. Thus black carbon is particularly harmful to the Arctic and to the glacial regions most threatened by warming.

Without immediate action, the window of opportunity to save the polar bear and the entire Arctic ecosystem will be lost. “This bill could make a real difference in saving polar bears and their Arctic habitat,” said Rodger Schlickeisen, president of Defenders of Wildlife. “We need to do everything we can to keep the Arctic blanketed in snow and ice, for the species that live there and to help cool the planet. We commend Mr. Inslee and his colleagues for introducing this vital bill to address the threat posed by black carbon emissions.”

Scientists have only recently highlighted the massive climate impacts of black carbon, which is an aerosol and not a greenhouse gas and is not regulated under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or other environmental treaties. Similarly, the major global warming bills of the 110th Congress, including the Lieberman-Warner bill that stalled on the Senate floor last summer, did not seek direct action on black carbon. But significant reductions of black carbon emissions are feasible both in the United States and abroad, especially in countries such as China, India, and Pakistan, which have high black carbon emissions from industrial activities, millions of residential cookstoves, and from forestry and agricultural practices.

“Black carbon emissions can be sharply reduced with existing technologies and action to reduce this pollutant is among the most effective strategies to slow Arctic and global warming in the near term,” said Trip Van Noppen, president of Earthjustice. “If passed, Rep. Inslee’s black carbon bill will show that the United States is fully engaged in the fight to reduce black carbon emissions, and protect species, ecosystems and cultures threatened by global warming.”

“We hope today’s bill is the start of the United States beginning to exert real leadership on global warming,” concluded Snape. “Mr. Inslee’s bill shows that the United States already possesses significant legal authority to combat global warming and that the solutions frequently possess environmental and economic benefits that far surpass the dirty status quo.”