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November 7, 2006

File Number: FG/01

Honourable Rona Ambrose
Minister of the Environment
House of Commons
Wellington Street
Ottawa Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Honourable Rona Ambrose:

Re: Canada's Commitment to the Kyoto Protocol

I am writing to you, on behalf of the Islands Trust Council, to ask the federal government to renew its commitment to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as established in Canada's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on December 17, 2002.

The Islands Trust is a unique federation of independent local governments which plans land use and regulates development in the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust Area, established by legislation, covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Islands, including Howe Sound and as far north as Comox. The Trust Area includes thirteen major islands and more than 450 smaller islands. The Islands Trust was established under the *Islands Trust Act* to protect the environment and communities of the Gulf Islands for the benefit of residents and the province generally. The twenty-six Trustees of the Islands Trust Council represent some 23,000 people who live within the Islands Trust Area.

Despite Canada's declared support for the protocol and its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by six per cent below 1990 levels, our greenhouse gases have risen by 27* per cent. In May, 2006 your new Conservative government tabled a budget that eliminated the previously-committed spending of \$3.2 billion for environmental programs through 2010, which would have paid municipalities and businesses to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. It also eliminated funding for personal conservation measures, such as the One Tonne Challenge, which was being actively promoted in the Trust Area, as well as homeowners' energy retrofit programs.

The potential impacts of climate change are well-known. The island communities within the Islands Trust Area are especially vulnerable to rising sea levels. Changing weather patterns may affect our water supplies and agricultural production, increase the risk of fires, disease and pest outbreaks in our forests, and cause shifts in ecosystems and loss of ecosystems. Such changes could also have socio-economic impacts in our small communities.

* Source: Times Colonist Editorial October 12, 2006

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Preserving Island communities, culture and environment

Bowen Denman Hornby Gabriola Galiano Gambier Lasqueti Mayne North Pender Salt Spring Saturna South Pender Thetis

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As a result of our growing concern about the impact of climate change and to clarify our position regarding the Kyoto Protocol, the Islands Trust Council recently passed the following motions:

That the Islands Trust Council request the Chair to write to the federal government and ask it to renew its commitment to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as established in Canada's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol;

That the Islands Trust Council request the Local Planning Committee to consider the topic of adaptive planning - including measures that Local Trust Committees could incorporate in Official Community Plans and Land Use Bylaws - to mitigate the potential impacts of climate change;

That the draft Strategic Plan include, under 'Protect and Enhance Natural Environment', adaptive planning to mitigate the potential impact of climate change; and

That the Islands Trust Council request the Executive Committee, Local Trust Committees and the Bowen Island Municipality to take opportunities to encourage island residents and visitors to be aware of the significant impact of climate change on our communities and the natural environment and to take steps to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases.

The federal government has a significant leadership role in our nation's efforts to address the issue of climate change. I look forward to your response on your government's plans with regard to meeting Canada's commitment to the Kyoto protocol.

Yours sincerely,



Kim Benson, Chair
Islands Trust Council

pc: Gary Lunn, MP, Saanich-Gulf Islands
Jean Crowder, MP, Nanaimo-Cowichan
James Lunney, MP, Nanaimo-Alberni
Catherine Bell, Vancouver Island North
Blair Wilson, West Vancouver/Sunshine Coast
Denise Savoie, MP, Victoria
Islands Trust website