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By [MIKE ALLEN](#) | 10/5/09 4:55 AM EDT



Timberland President and CEO Jeff Swartz signed on to the letter urging the Senate and White House to move on the energy bill.

Photo: AP

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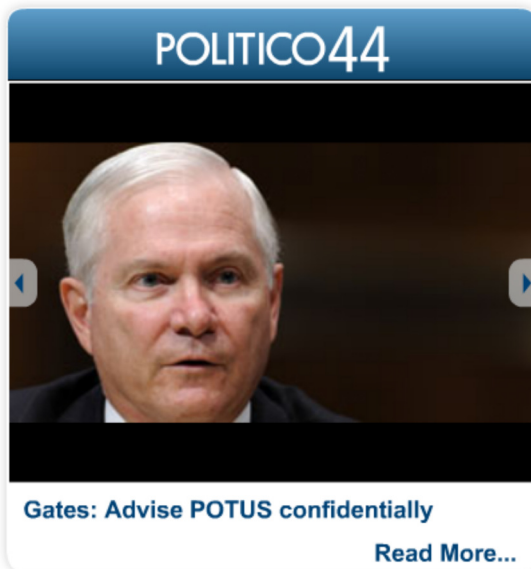
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Two coalitions of top U.S. corporations are using Washington visits and more than \$1 million in advertising to prod the Senate and White House to accelerate work on an energy and climate bill.

Executives from the groups tell POLITICO that they will argue they need certainty to plan for the future. And although some companies disagree, these executives contend that many businesses, and the overall economy, would eventually benefit from the new law.

The House has passed a tough climate bill, but the Senate has looked unlikely to follow suit ahead of a United Nations climate change conference in Copenhagen beginning Dec. 7.

But in a new open letter to President Barack Obama and the U.S. Senate, two dozen major brands — ranging from eBay to HP to Gap to PG&E — declare: “We are business leaders from companies of all sizes and many sectors calling for your leadership. We call on you to enact comprehensive legislation. ... Now it’s time for the United States Senate to act.”



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To make the case, more than 150 business leaders from utilities, manufacturers and clean-energy companies plan to "swarm" Capitol Hill on Tuesday and Wednesday. The fly-in is being organized by We Can Lead, an umbrella business organization.

The CEOs will hold a news conference at the Capitol at noon Wednesday. They are scheduled to eat dinner with Interior Secretary Ken Salazar on Tuesday, and to hold a White House meeting with Energy Secretary Steven Chu and Commerce Secretary Gary Locke on Wednesday morning. Lobbying meetings are scheduled in 35 Senate offices.

"We Can Lead shows the conventional wisdom about business and climate is wrong," said David Di Martino of the Clean Energy Works Campaign. "Momentum on our sign among business leaders grows."

Separately, on Tuesday, 28 companies and labor and green groups — including United Technologies, Johnson & Johnson, GE, Weyerhaeuser, the Nature Conservancy and the Environmental Defense Action Fund — are launching a seven-figure advertising campaign "in support of comprehensive clean energy and climate change legislation."

John Rowe, chairman and CEO of Exelon, which is participating in both campaigns, said in a statement: "Companies need the legislative certainty to start making the substantial investments needed to jump-start a low-carbon economy and create jobs."

Timberland President and CEO Jeff Swartz, whose grandfather founded the footwear company, signed on to the letter and said corporations just want to know "what the facts are, and I'll get around to innovating in order to make a profit against them."

"I'm a boot maker, and I just want a chance to get a clear signal from our government: This is the price of doing business," he said. "I think, 'Terrific. I can get back to work.' We didn't have to have a minimum wage before; we didn't have to have [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] regulations before. And guess what? CEOs figure out how to make a profit when you tell them what the cost structure is."

The letter was coordinated by Business for Innovative Climate & Energy Policy, a project of Ceres (pronounced "series"), a national network of investors, environmental organizations and public interest groups.

The group aims to goad specific senators with ads in Arkansas and North Dakota. Swartz plans to make his case personally in Washington this week.