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## Fathoming the Oceans

Wednesday, June 18, 2008; A14

While the Senate failed to make progress this month on legislation to address global warming, the stage is set for consideration next year ["Senate Leaders Pull Measure on Climate," news story, June 7]. Carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere are an important starting point. But climate change is a complex process that also includes the influence of ocean and terrestrial systems. In fact, most of the carbon emitted into the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels ultimately is stored in the oceans, which are the engines of the planetary climate system.

We are in an era of environmental scenario building, so that people can make informed policy and business decisions. To successfully adapt to the changing planet, we need accurate predictions based on scientific data and models. Because we don't know enough about what is happening in the oceans today, we cannot accurately predict future climate conditions. We need Congress to accelerate investment in climate research and support federal initiatives to design, build and integrate ocean observing systems so we can make informed decisions.

The oceans need to be part of the climate debate. The stakes could not be higher for the planet, and for our personal well-being and economic security.

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