

March 27, 2007

Dear Dean Boswell:

An immense and ever-growing body of scientific evidence concludes that over-reliance on fossil fuels is causing the planet to warm at dangerous rates and the climate to destabilize. The world's top scientists tell us that if we are to avoid the risk of future climate disasters, the U.S. and other industrialized nations must halt the growth of global warming pollution immediately. Reversing global warming will be a defining challenge of the 21st century. Addressing this threat successfully will mean transforming our economy, our institutions, our daily lives – and doing so within a generation.

We believe this challenge calls for the kind of innovative vision and aggressive leadership that Johns Hopkins has demonstrated over the past century. There are few other institutions in society that have the influence, the critical mass and the diversity of skills needed to successfully make this transformation. Johns Hopkins is an ideal setting to develop workable new strategies, systems, behaviors and technologies that can be scaled up to the community and state levels. By involving students, faculty and staff, our institution can become an effective model for achieving climate neutrality and sustainability. We need Johns Hopkins to take the lead on cutting-edge research, action and demonstration projects that will speed the path to climate neutrality across all society's sectors – catalyzing investment and driving the development of new markets.

Furthermore, we believe that pursuing climate neutrality is feasible and sound business policy for our university. Gains in energy efficiency will reduce our energy costs and save money. Investments into University-owned renewable energy sources, while requiring an up-front premium, will decrease long-run energy costs and can hedge against the volatile and rising costs of fossil fuels. We also recognize that anticipating imminent state or national carbon regulations will give Hopkins an edge in future carbon markets. Moreover, the announcement of such a progressive and ambitious energy initiative has the potential to attract renewed alumni interest and support.

Most importantly, pursuing climate neutrality is an opportunity for Johns Hopkins to demonstrate leadership and responsibility. Leading society to reverse human-induced global warming is a task that fits squarely into the educational, research, and public service missions of Johns Hopkins. Our place as a leader in higher education and steward of the Knowledge for the World Campaign gives us a unique opportunity and an important role to play in crafting solutions to this great challenge. As a university that contributes so much to the world of science, technology, and public service, we feel it is imperative that we set a prominent example of responsible energy use. We believe that Johns Hopkins *can* achieve climate neutrality and that doing so will demonstrate exceptional leadership in sustainability and responsibility to public health.

As representatives of the student body, we feel that climate change is an issue of great importance to the Hopkins community that should be addressed by the administration. We believe that pursuing such an ambitious initiative as climate neutrality at Johns Hopkins has the potential to invigorate and unite our campus behind a common purpose by tapping the optimism and can-do spirit embedded in our university's history. We ask for your support in exploring ways to address this issue most effectively and to achieve climate neutrality for our university.

Sincerely,

The Hopkins Energy Action Team
Endorsed by the Student Council