

Nebraska farmers and ranchers appreciate Sens. Ben Nelson and Mike Johanns going to bat for them by cosponsoring a Resolution of Disapproval Thursday (Jan. 20) to stop EPA's attempt to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act, Nebraska Farm Bureau said Friday.

"We appreciate them taking action to stop EPA's effort to overreach its powers," Keith Olsen, Nebraska Farm Bureau president, said. Olsen is a farmer from Grant, Neb.

EPA said in December it would regulate greenhouse gases from automobiles, farms and ranches and other sources under the Clean Air Act because they endanger public health and welfare. "The EPA rule itself establishes only a weak, indirect link between greenhouse gases and public health, going so far as to admit there are uncertainties over the net direct health impacts of the gases it's attempting to regulate," Olsen said.

If allowed to be implemented, EPA's rule would have severe consequences for the U.S. economy, he said, including farmers and ranchers, because of high costs to comply with the rule.

Beyond the suspect science, EPA's action seeks to circumvent Congressional authority, he said. "Right now Congress is in the midst of extensive debate about whether greenhouse gases should be regulated. And both the current and past presidential administrations have said the Clean Air Act is not the appropriate vehicle for such regulation.

"It makes no sense for the U.S. to burden itself with this EPA rule when two of the largest emitters of greenhouse gases, India and China, have explicitly refused to reduce their emissions. Without an effective international agreement, the U.S. would be foolish to damage our economy for little if any environmental benefit," Olsen said.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Ala) introduced the Resolution of Disapproval. Nearly 150 agricultural organizations nationwide, including the American Farm Bureau, are supporting the resolution.