

**Opening Remarks of
C.V. Mathai, Ph.D., President of A&WMA
At the
A&WMA Climate Policy Conference in DC
April 2-3, 2008**

Good Morning!

Welcome to this fourth in a series of climate conferences sponsored by the Air and Waste Management Association. Today, we are kicking off a multi-year program to address both policy and technical issues associated with implementing this nation's response to climate change.

I want to thank you for attending this symposium. Let me extend a special welcome to our international guests. My name is CV Mathai and I am the President of the Air and Waste Management Association.

Founded in 1907, A&WMA is the premier environmental association of nearly 9,000 professionals from 65 countries around the world. Our members are employed in all sectors of the economy: government, industry, academia, law, and consulting. The primary mission of the association is to facilitate a neutral forum for exchanging information on environmental issues. The association does not take any advocacy positions on issues.

The topic of this symposium is one of the most important issues facing our generation, and indeed, our planet. There is little doubt that atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases are increasing, and the earth is warming. While there is still some debate about the extent of the contributions of human activities to the observed warming, global warming is in fact, occurring.

Climate change has been a major topic of debate in the United States Congress for over a decade, and it has intensified since the Democratic Party took control of both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate.

Numerous bills have been introduced in both chambers to address Climate Change, and both the House and Senate Committees have held a number of hearings. The most prominent among those bills is the Lieberman-Warner bill S. 2191, America's Climate Security Act. That bill has been approved by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee last December, and is awaiting consideration by the full Senate.

While we do not know whether a climate bill will become law this year, it is becoming increasingly clear that climate legislation will become a reality within the next 2 to 3 years.

Last April the U. S. Supreme Court issued an opinion that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency can regulate greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act, provided the Agency first makes a "regulatory finding" that those gases are endangering public health and welfare.

Last week, EPA Administrator Johnson notified Congress that he plans to initiate a rulemaking process toward an endangerment finding. Most likely, such a finding may not occur until sometime next year.

At the State and Regional levels, there is an even more rapidly evolving effort to address Climate Change. Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) in the Northeast, California Legislation AB 32, the Western Climate Initiative, and Midwestern Greenhouse Gas Reduction Accord are examples of what is going on in North America. We will hear more about these and other efforts during the course this symposium.

In this symposium, we have chosen not to address the science of climate change. We will focus on climate policy issues being considered in Congress and in various regions of the country. We will also hear about what would be the impacts of implementing such policies on our citizens and the society-at-large.

Let me now introduce our keynote speaker, the Honorable Senator Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut.