Thank you for coming out today to a place that carries great symbolism for Texans concerned about the heavy hand of distant government.

This week, the hand of Washington has gotten much heavier as a group of unelected bureaucrats has moved closer to derailing our economy by adopting ill-considered environmental policy, while the Senate moves closer to passing its own job-killing energy legislation.

When the Environmental Protection Agency unilaterally decided to declare carbon dioxide “a threat to public health” they shut down an increasingly informed legislative dialogue in pursuit of their increasingly radical utopian view.

At the same time, they are placing Texas, and the rest of the country, in serious economic jeopardy.

This is not a huge surprise.

A little more than a year ago, I asked leaders of three state agencies that oversee our energy industry to craft a strategy for defending Texas from an increasingly activist EPA, while keeping a close eye on what the US Congress might do to Texas...in the interest of “going green.”

I’d like to thank Commissioner Michael Williams of the Railroad Commission, Chairman Bryan Shaw of TCEQ, and Chairman Barry Smitherman of the PUC for throwing themselves into the effort and helping sound the alarm on these proposed regulations and devastating pieces of legislation.

I think most outside observers would agree that our collective efforts to battle this
legislation were gaining traction, and the chances of cap & trade passing the Senate were dwindling because Americans were learning the facts about its cost and inability to influence carbon levels.

In one fell swoop, however, the EPA effectively ended honest debate on this vital issue, and displayed a degree of self-importance and unilateral decision making that has become routine for the current administration.

Could the timing of this audacious step be connected to their realization that their glacier of “irrefutable scientific proof” is being melted away by reports of manipulated data, destroyed information and the censorship of views that departed from accepted dogma.

Or is it simply an effort to save face in Copenhagen, striving to make a favorable impression on the world at the expense of our own nation's best interests?

How else does one explain their willingness and haste to issue a finding that will cast hundreds of thousands out of work and cause prices to “necessarily skyrocket” as our president phrased it, at a time when the economy is ill-equipped to absorb such a blow?

That is why, today, I sent a letter to EPA Administrator, Lisa Jackson, asking her to withdraw her agency’s endangerment finding, then take an honest look at ALL the science as they consider, for the first time, how their plans will affect ordinary Americans.

Their time would be much better spent streamlining regulations, not burdening job creators with unnecessary mandates.

Let’s not forget that EPA leadership previously admitted that these job-killing, high-cost regulations will neither lower world-wide carbon levels, nor affect global temperatures.

What makes their finding so illogical and the sweeping mandates that will likely follow, so threatening is that Texas has already shown how to lower emission levels without killing jobs and jacking up prices.

Over the past seven years, Texas has reduced carbon emission levels more than just about any other state in the country and more than any other nation except Germany.

This is a by-product of our all-of-the-above energy strategy, which is providing incentives that foster innovation by investing in companies that are bringing the latest energy technology to the marketplace, then getting out of the way so the market can do its job, free from unnecessarily restrictive regulations.

We’ve done this while expanding our economy and managing a growing state population without the sweeping mandates and draconian punishments that Washington applies to just about every challenge.

That same mindset is clear in the working version of the Senate energy bill, where yet another one-size-fits-all solution is taking shape with a national energy tax woven in.

Under cap and trade...or should I say “cap and tax”...Texans will bear more than their share of negative effects, from an average increase in annual living costs of approximately $1,200 per household, to the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Washington clearly knows this, otherwise they wouldn't have included funds in the bill to pay displaced workers in the energy and manufacturing fields, underwrite their healthcare, and provide for job retraining for up to three years.

This dangerous piece of legislation will also reduce the chance of home ownership for many Americans by creating a national building code that could ultimately price some new homebuyers out of the market entirely.
I'm a firm believer that Washington's one-size-fits all approaches don't work, whether you're talking energy policies, health care reform or economic development.

Instead, states should have the freedom to compete against each other and make decisions in the best interest of their citizens.

I would suggest that those in Washington who are making these one-size-fits all policies go back and read the 10th amendment.

Until they do, we will continue sounding the alarm on these misguided, overly intrusive policies that will devastate our state and national economy.