

As Holly [previously described](#), Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) has introduced a resolution to express disapproval over the EPA's greenhouse gas endangerment finding. Murkowski is also considering a different tactic to wreak havoc with efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She [may introduce](#) an amendment to the Senate bill to raise the debt ceiling. The amendment would force an up or down vote on the Boxer-Kerry cap and trade legislation, a strategy designed to show that the bill lacks majority support in the Senate.

If Murkowski succeeds in this tactic it's obviously terrible news for climate change legislation. Among other things, China, Brazil, South Africa and India are moving forward with plans to meet the commitments they made in Copenhagen to take voluntary steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But these countries want ["proof of commitment"](#) from the developed countries that they too are moving forward, language obviously targeted most clearly at the U.S. A negative vote in the Senate on Boxer-Kerry would put President Obama in a real bind, to say the least.

But here's what I wonder both about the EPA resolution tactic and debt ceiling amendment tactic. Couldn't they backfire? [Nate Silver thinks](#) there are at least fifty votes for cap and trade that are "likely," "highly likely" and "near certain," along with three possible "maybes" (though his analysis is 7 months old and includes Ted Kennedy as one of the "yeses.") At a minimum the EPA resolution seems almost certain to be defeated given that it's only a resolution and is designed not to pass something affirmative but only to express sentiment to stop something already in motion. But even on cap and trade doesn't the Murkowski strategy risk allowing the Democrats to vote on cap and trade without the threat of a filibuster and thus to pass the legislation with only a simple majority? Or am I missing something?