

The Seven Principles of a New Energy Policy

CONGRESS: As you craft legislation on energy policy and global warming, we ask you to ensure that your legislation makes real and verifiable progress on stabilizing the climate, improves the economy, benefits the public and reforms the energy sector:

Reform energy policy: New national energy policies should encourage efficiency, innovation, competition, and fairness. We need more aggressive energy efficiency policies for electricity and buildings, increased CAFE standards like those passed by the Senate, and the renewable electricity standard included in the House energy bill. .

Promote a clean energy future: Invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy to create new industries and good jobs here at home. .

Cap and cut carbon emissions to science-based levels: Science tells us in order to prevent the worst impacts of global warming we must start cutting global warming pollution by 2012, with reductions in total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions of at least 15 to 20 percent below current levels by 2020 and 80 percent by mid-century.

Use all public assets for public benefit: The value of carbon permits should benefit the public — through auctions or other mechanisms — not generate windfalls for polluting industries. Free allocations, if any, must be limited to a short transition period.

Ensure a just transition: Allowances should be used to help finance a just transition that keeps and creates jobs, reduces impacts on low-and moderate-income citizens, and mitigates harm to affected workers and communities.

Provide aid to adapt to an altered climate: Allowances should be used to help distressed and impoverished people around the world, as well as wildlife and ecosystems in the face of global warming's varied threats.

Manage costs without breaking the cap. "Safety valves" and other devices that break the cap on emissions must not be allowed. Any offsets must be real, surplus, verifiable, permanent, and enforceable.

CONGRESS: We must act quickly. But we don't have ten years to get it wrong and then start over. Energy investments made today will still be in use in thirty and forty years. Carbon dioxide remains in the atmosphere for generations; the longer we wait, the more aggressive our actions will have to be. The undersigned groups stand ready to work with sponsors and leaders in both Houses of Congress to achieve these critical objectives for a fair, safe, and sustainable future..

Sierra Club • PIRG • Audubon
Physicians for Social Responsibility