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Recommended Climate and Energy Priorities for the Obama Administration

To revitalize our faltering economy and meet the immense challenges of global warming, we must transform the ways America and the rest of the world produce and use energy. At the cornerstone of the President's economic recovery strategy should be three closely-related goals: cutting the pollution that causes global warming, repowering America with clean energy, and ending our dependence on oil. Investments in the energy efficiency and clean energy technology needed to meet these goals, and investments in protecting our health, our vulnerable communities and our natural resources from climate impacts, will rebuild our economy, create millions of green American jobs, and make a more just society.

We must start cutting global warming pollution now. There is broad scientific agreement that keeping global average temperatures from increasing more than another 2° Fahrenheit from today's levels is necessary if we are to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. According to the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we have a reasonable chance of meeting this objective if developed countries as a whole cut their emissions 25-40% from 1990 levels by 2020 and at least 80% by 2050; within this time frame, major developing countries as a whole must also act promptly to slow their emissions growth and then substantially reduce their emissions. To be within this range in 2020, the U.S. would have to reduce its emissions by 35% from current levels.

To meet these goals, the President should

1. Work with Congress to pass legislation in 2009 that revitalizes our economy and delivers energy and climate security –
 - Set mandatory limits that reduce US global warming pollution consistent with keeping further warming below 2° F, including ambitious domestic reductions targets for 2020 and 2050, a cap and auction program and other policies to make additional reductions at home and abroad, and a prompt science-based review to accelerate reductions if necessary.
 - Auction the carbon permits and use the revenue for investing in a massive clean energy transition, creating green jobs, protecting vulnerable communities and natural resources, and providing consumer relief, especially to those most in need.
 - Move America towards a 100% clean electricity future by maximizing energy efficiency, modernizing the grid, and greatly expanding power generation from renewable energy resources.
 - Get America moving by investing in clean transportation infrastructure that cuts global warming pollution.

2. Tackle global warming using the executive branch's powers under existing laws –



- Grant the California waiver, allowing California and 13 other states to enforce their standards for global warming pollution from vehicles.
 - Use the Clean Air Act to declare that global warming pollution endangers public health and welfare and to set standards for power plants, vehicles, and fuels.
 - Use our energy laws to strengthen fuel economy and appliance efficiency standards.
 - Order every agency to consider global warming in its actions affecting energy use and managing natural resources and to develop a coordinated, interagency natural resources adaptation strategy.
3. Restore America's global leadership on global warming –
- Demonstrate US action by setting mandatory limits on our own global warming pollution through new legislation and implementation of existing laws.
 - Work with other nations to reach a new climate treaty that keeps further warming below 2° F at the Copenhagen climate summit at the end of 2009.
 - Lead a worldwide effort to finance clean energy deployment, forest conservation, and adaptation to unavoidable climate impacts.

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