



CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE



THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER



JANET NAPOLITANO



BILL RICHARDSON

May 17, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
5230 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Recommendations for National Climate Policy Based on State Leadership

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Reid:

Over the past several years Arizona, California, Oregon, New Mexico, and Washington have developed and are implementing economically sound policies and plans to address climate change. Important regional policy agreements have also been formed, including the Western Regional Climate Action Initiative, the Southwest Climate Initiative and the West Coast Governors' Climate Change Initiative. In addition, many cities have set targets for emissions reductions, and Canadian Provinces are taking action, including British Columbia.

State and regional climate mitigation plans, in particular, have resulted in strong new goals for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions that are based on detailed public planning processes, with high levels of stakeholder participation and advanced technical analysis. Through these efforts, states have developed a full range of specific policies to achieve emissions reductions in all economic sectors. These policies are tailor made to meet the circumstances of individual locations, and in many cases are broadly applicable to all states.

Our experience has shown that the goals established through these efforts are consistent with climate stabilization needs and can be achieved through actions that not only reduce GHG emissions, but also generate billions of dollars in net economic savings, expand markets, create new jobs, reduce energy dependence, and provide many other benefits. Now is the time to learn from this success as we construct federal laws and policies that effectively reduce emissions and establish US leadership on climate change policy.

As an urgent starting point, Congress must demand that the US Environmental Protection Agency issue California's long-standing request for a waiver to move forward with its clean tailpipe standards. This waiver is essential for states to move forward with implementation. There is no justification for EPA to continue to withhold issuance of the waiver, and it will result in substantial GHG reductions that advance both the states' and the President's call for significant GHG reductions in the transportation sector.

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We welcome new bills proposed by members of both parties to reduce national GHG emissions and offer assistance with development of future climate change legislation, based on the following key needs:

- 1. We need strong national goals. To lessen the impacts of global warming,** the world's leading climate scientists say we must take immediate action to reduce GHG emissions by 70-80 percent by 2050. In the US, this goal translates into a reduction by one third of projected US emissions levels by 2020. Twenty states, representing 150 million Americans, have developed or are developing GHG emissions reduction goals consistent with these needs. We urge Congress to set strong short and long term national goals to avoid catastrophic climate disruption.
- 2. We need a comprehensive approach to climate policy.** The achievement of climate stabilization goals requires comprehensive approaches that cover all economic sectors and use a variety of implementation mechanisms, such as those in recent state climate action plans. Key action areas that need policy support include: energy efficiency and conservation, clean and renewable energy, transportation and land use efficiency, agriculture and forest conservation and carbon sequestration, waste management, and industrial process improvements. We urge Congress to support action in all of these areas.
- 3. We must act quickly.** Because GHGs persist for long periods, today's emissions will endure for generations. Long-term decisions we make now on our nation's infrastructure, energy facilities and natural resources will affect the atmosphere for a century or more. Congress must act quickly to encourage efficient approaches to growth and avoid lasting decisions that result in high and irreversible levels of GHG emissions.
- 4. We must help, not hurt, the states.** Constructive federal action is needed to support the full range of state and national climate actions needed to reach strong national climate goals. To harness the full potential of state and federal actions, Congress should reach out to states and not preempt their leadership. Federal legislation should build upon the efforts of the states and provide flexibility for states to take more aggressive action on global warming to account for differing economic and environmental needs.

We urge you to work with us to develop strong, smart and comprehensive federal climate change policy that incorporates effective roles for state and local governments. Please contact any of our offices for more information and to discuss opportunities to collaborate.

Sincerely,

Janet Napolitano
Governor of Arizona

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of California

Bill Richardson
Governor of New Mexico

Theodore R. Kulongoski
Governor of Oregon

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor of Washington

cc: Members of Congress