

Program Brief

“CLEAN FUEL AND VEHICLE POLICIES IN THE U.S., THE EU AND CHINA”

A talk by

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Washington, D.C.

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Background information provided by the
American Reference Center

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Dr. Dennis Leaf currently serves as senior adviser for international programs in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Transportation and Air Quality in Washington, D.C. He provides advice to senior EPA management on a variety of international efforts aimed at reducing conventional pollutants and greenhouse gases through the deployment of clean fuels and vehicle technologies, including clean diesel.

This international work includes current projects with both the Chinese State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) and the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau related to clean fuels and vehicles.

Mr. Leaf has been at EPA for 25 years, 18 years of which have been in the Office of Air and Radiation. He has broad experience in urban, regional, and global air pollution issues, clean air and energy legislation, and domestic and international efforts to reduce acid rain, emissions from the transportation sector, ozone depletion and global climate change.

Positions held by Mr. Leaf include chief of the evaluation and international section of EPA's Acid Rain Division, Special Assistant for Air Issues to the Administrator of EPA, Special Assistant for climate change and international air issues to the Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation, and legislative assistant for energy and environmental issues to a United States Senator.

He has represented EPA and the United States governments in dozens of bilateral and multilateral meetings and negotiations, and has written and lectured extensively on clean air and energy issues.

Mr. Leaf holds a B.A. from the University of Maryland and an M.A. in International Affairs from the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, and a Certificate in Legislative Studies from Georgetown University.

Mr. Leaf's office is responsible for a wide variety of programs that impact transportation vehicles and fuel quality, including the setting of vehicle emission and fuel quality standards in the United States. The office has established stringent new emission standards for automobiles and a variety of heavy duty and off-road vehicles, in conjunction with a dramatic lowering of the sulfur content of diesel fuel. Currently the office is engaged in a program to significantly increase the use of renewable fuels in the transportation sector. In addition to a wide variety of regulatory programs, the office implements a number of voluntary programs aimed at reducing both conventional pollutants and greenhouse gases. These programs include large-scale retrofits of the existing fleet of diesel vehicles (e.g., school buses), clean port programs, and SmartWay transport (e.g., reducing energy consumption and pollution from the trucking fleet). Finally the office conducts research into new vehicle technologies, including the development of a hydraulic diesel hybrid vehicle, which produces significant energy and environmental benefits.

United States Environmental Protection Agency: <http://www.epa.gov>

- Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ): <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/>

REMARKS, STATEMENTS, & BRIEFINGS

Proposed Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases Under the Clean Air Act

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), April 17, 2009

The Proposed Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under the Clean Air Act was signed on April 17, 2009, and will be published in the Federal Register and available in the Docket (www.regulations.gov) shortly under Docket ID No. [EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0171]. While EPA has taken steps to ensure the accuracy of this Internet version of the document, it is not the official version.

FULL TEXT: <http://epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment.html>

TEXT OF PRE-PUBLICATION:

<http://epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment/downloads/GHGEndangermentProposal.pdf>

Summary of the Science Supporting EPA's Finding That Greenhouse Gases Threaten Public Health and Welfare: <http://epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment/downloads/ScienceFactSheet.pdf>

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson's Earth Day Message

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), April 2009

At the first Earth Day 39 years ago, 20 million Americans stood up to protect human health and the environment.

It was a time when many American cities were blanketed with dangerous pollution and smog.

A time when in many communities, local waterways were too polluted to swim in, to fish from, or to drink.

That first Earth Day grew into a movement that reached millions more, and built a better future for all of us.

We've helped clear harmful toxins from our air, our water, and land.

And what started with those 20 million Americans almost four decades ago will engage more than a billion people this Earth Day, April 22nd.

People all around the world will join together to say that it is our job to protect and preserve our planet and the people that live on it.

We've seen how far we can come if individuals take the initiative and get involved.

But we still have a long way to go ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: <http://www.epa.gov/earthday/april09videotext.htm>

Transatlantic Landscape for Energy Innovation and Cooperation

Remarks by Ambassador Reno L. Harnish

Transatlantic Energy Innovation Roundtable, Washington, D.C., April 9, 2009

A. Existing Support

Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 was already an important driver of clean transportation fuels and energy efficiency measures. Fuel ethanol plants have now evolved through several stages of design resulting in substantial improvements in efficiency while economizing on resources such as energy and water use.

In the stimulus bill Congress extended the production tax credit for 4 years for wind and 5 years for solar renewable energy. We understand that these are not easily used as income offset in a recession. The Treasury will monetize these credits according to the American renewable energy association. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: <http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2009/121595.htm>

Remarks by the President on the American Automotive Industry

The White House, March 30, 2009

... But I'm confident that if each are willing to do their part, if all of us are doing our part, then this restructuring, as painful as it will be in the short term, will mark not an end, but a new beginning for a great American industry -- an auto industry that is once more out-competing the world; a 21st century auto industry that is creating new jobs, unleashing new prosperity, and manufacturing the fuel-efficient cars and trucks that will carry us towards an energy-independent future. I am absolutely committed to working with Congress and the auto companies to meet one goal: The United States of America will lead the world in building the next generation of clean cars. ...

But our auto industry is not moving in the right direction fast enough to succeed in a very tough environment. So let me discuss what measures need to be taken by each of the auto companies requesting taxpayer assistance, ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-on-the-American-Automotive-Industry-3/30/09/

Intervention of the United States: Plenary Session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention

By Todd Stern, Special Envoy for Climate Change

Bonn, Germany, March 29, 2009

I am pleased to be here in Bonn today for this important session. As the President's Special Envoy for Climate Change, I want to say on behalf of President Obama and his entire team that we are very glad to be back, we want to make up for lost time, and we are seized with the urgency of the task before us.

... You will not hear anyone on my team cast doubt upon or downplay the threat of global climate change. The science is clear, and the threat is real. The facts on the ground are outstripping the worst case scenarios. The costs of inaction—or inadequate actions—are unacceptable.

But along with this challenge comes a great opportunity. By transforming to a low-carbon economy, we can stimulate global economic growth and put ourselves on a path of sustainable development for the 21st century. I would go so far as to say that those who hang back and cling to a high-carbon path will be economic losers in the end because with the scientific facts of global warming getting worse and worse, high-carbon products and production methods will not be viable for long. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: <http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2009/120974.htm>

Press Briefing of the U.S. Delegation UNFCCC Climate Change Talks

With Todd Stern, Special Envoy for Climate Change

Bonn, Germany, March 29, 2009

Special Envoy Stern: ... America is now once again strongly committed to developing a global response to climate change. We do not doubt the science, we do not doubt the urgency, and we do not doubt the enormity of the challenge before us. President Obama and his Administration are fully committed to action, both at home – where that action is well underway already – and abroad. ...

Let me say, in the course of our conversations here and in the course of conversations that I have had over the past six weeks - we have been doing a lot of listening, a lot of sharing of ideas with many of my counterparts - I am more convinced than ever that it is important that we be guided in these negotiations by a combination of science and pragmatism. Our job in these negotiations is to define a path forward that will be supported by the people that we serve so that our agreements can actually take effect with all countries participating, and can then start to make a difference. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: <http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2009/121010.htm>

Remarks by the President on Investments in Clean Energy and New Technology

Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, March 23, 2009

... We can remain the world's leading importer of foreign oil, or we can become the world's leading exporter of renewable energy. We can allow climate change to wreck unnatural havoc, or we can create jobs preventing its worst effects. We can hand over the jobs of the 21st century to our competitors, or we can create those jobs right here in America.

We know the right choice. We have known the right choice for a generation. The time has come to make that choice, to act on what we know. And that's why my budget makes a historic investment: \$150 billion over 10 years in clean energy and energy efficiency, building on what we've achieved through the Recovery Plan. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-The-President-on-Investments-in-Clean-Energy-and-New-Technologies-3-23-09/

Keynote Remarks at U.S. Climate Action Symposium

By Todd Stern, Special Envoy for Climate Change

Senate Hart Office Building, Washington, D.C., March 3, 2009

... The U.S. is in the game. We are seized by the importance and urgency of the task. The President has made the transformation to a low-carbon economy a core part of his domestic agenda. And we are eager to get a strong new international agreement done in Copenhagen. ...

It is of course, a vital thing that the United States is back, because the seriousness of the climate problem becomes more stark and disturbing with each passing year.

Recent science indicates that key climate impacts will happen more rapidly and be more severe than the IPCC assessments of only two years ago. Arctic sea ice is disappearing much faster than anticipated, and researchers now predict ice-free summers in the Arctic Ocean as soon as 2013, creating a feedback loop, as dark water absorbs more sunlight and increases warming. The melting of permafrost in the tundra raises the risk of a huge methane release, with more dangerous feedback potential. The Greenland Ice Sheet is steadily shrinking. Sea level is now expected to rise

much more than previously anticipated – some 0.8-2.5 meters in the 21st century. Water supplies are increasingly at risk with the melting of glaciers in Asia and the Western Hemisphere. And oceans are rapidly acidifying. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: <http://www.state.gov/g/oes/rls/remarks/2009/119983.htm>

The U.S. and China Working Toward Clean Energy

With Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State

Online Chat moderated by Professor Qi Ye, hosted by *China Daily*, Beijing, China, February 22, 2009

... Secretary Clinton: Well, as part of the agreement in principle that we announced yesterday between myself and Foreign Minister Yang, we will enter into strategic and economic dialogues co-chaired by myself and the Treasury Secretary.

And one of the most important tracks will be clean energy and climate change. We wish to create a series of actions and partnerships between our countries, between our businesses, our academic institutions, our citizens. And we hope to work together in the lead-up to Copenhagen at the end of this year, with a new climate treaty. We hope that there will be many opportunities, as I saw for myself yesterday, for partnerships between American companies and Chinese companies to produce cleaner energy. And our new Energy Secretary, Dr. Steven Chu, wants to work to help create more intellectual property that would be jointly designed and implemented by Chinese and American researchers.

So, we are just at the beginning of this cooperative relationship on clean energy and climate change. But I am very hopeful that it will continue to grow. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/02/119435.htm>

Dialogue on U.S.-China Partnership on Clean Energy

With Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State, Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern and President of GE Energy China Jack Wen

Taiyang Gong Power Plant, Beijing, China, February 21, 2009

... Secretary Clinton: ... When, 30 years ago this year, the United States and China established diplomatic relations. We weren't thinking at that time about climate change. There were other pressing global issues that we began to listen to one another, and talk together, and try to understand.

But today, we know that climate change and clean energy are two of the biggest challenges our countries and the world face. This cooperative clean energy venture here, at this power plant, acknowledges an inescapable fact, that the interdependent world in which we live requires us to find new ways to collaborate and cooperate in the face of unprecedented global challenges and untapped global opportunities.

Now, addressing climate change and promoting clean energy is not only a global environmental issue. It is a health issue. It is an economic issue. It is a security issue. And we have to look at it all together in that comprehensive way. And I know that the partnership we see here today can bear so much fruit. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/02/119433.htm>

Remarks by the President on Jobs, Energy Independence, and Climate Change

The White House, January 26, 2009

... Now America has arrived at a crossroads. Embedded in American soil and the wind and the sun, we have the resources to change. Our scientists, businesses and workers have the capacity to move us forward. It falls on us to choose whether to risk the peril that comes with our current course or to seize the promise of energy independence. For the sake of our security, our economy and our planet, we must have the courage and commitment to change.

It will be the policy of my administration to reverse our dependence on foreign oil, while building a new energy economy that will create millions of jobs. We hold no illusion about the task that lies ahead. I cannot promise a quick fix; no single technology or set of regulations will get the job done. But we will commit ourselves to steady, focused, pragmatic pursuit of an America that is free from our energy dependence and empowered by a new energy economy that puts millions of our citizens to work.

Today, I'm announcing the first steps on our journey toward energy independence, as we develop new energy, set new fuel efficiency standards, and address greenhouse gas emissions. Each step begins to move us in a new direction, while giving us the tools that we need to change. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog_post/Fromperiltoprogress/

Appointment of Special Envoy on Climate Change Todd Stern

With Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State

Washington, D.C., January 26, 2009

Secretary Clinton: ... As should be evident by now, the President and I believe that American leadership is essential to meeting the challenges of the 21st century. And chief among those is the complex, urgent, and global threat of climate change. From rapidly rising temperatures to melting arctic icecaps, from lower crop yields to dying forests, from unforgiving hurricanes to unrelenting droughts, we have no shortage of evidence that our world is facing a climate crisis. ...

Mr. Stern: ... As the President and Secretary Clinton have made clear, climate change poses a profound threat to our future. If our deepest obligation in life is to care for our children and leave a better world for them and those who follow, then we must confront climate change now with an entirely new level of commitment, energy, and focus. Our scientists are telling us, emphatically, that the rate at which we are warming the planet is unsustainable and will cause vast and potentially catastrophic damage to our environment, our economy, and our national security.

And so the challenge before us is great, but so is the opportunity. Containing climate change will require nothing less than transforming the global economy from a high-carbon to a low-carbon energy base. But done right, this can free us from our dependence on foreign oil and become a driver for economic growth in the 21st century. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/01/115409.htm>

Massachusetts v. EPA Supreme Court Case

Pew Center on Global Climate Change, April 2007

On April 2, 2007 the Supreme Court released its ruling in the case of the state of Massachusetts vs. the Environmental Protection Agency. Massachusetts and eleven other states, along with several local governments and non-governmental organizations (petitioners), sued the EPA for not regulating the emissions of four greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide (CO₂), from the transportation sector. The petitioners claimed that human-influenced global climate change was causing adverse effects, such as sea-level rise, to the state of Massachusetts. In a 5-4 decision, the court ruled in favor of Massachusetts et al, finding that EPA has the authority to regulate CO₂ and other greenhouse gases...

FULL INFORMATION: <http://www.pewclimate.org/epavsma.cfm>

Opinion of Court, April 2, 2007: <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/06pdf/05-1120.pdf>

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Energy Efficiency: The First Fuel

eJournal, Bureau of International Information Programs/ U.S. Department of State

April 2009

Increasing the efficient use of existing energy supplies is widely acknowledged as the fastest, cheapest, and cleanest way to meet future energy needs. *Energy Efficiency: The First Fuel* examines the strong U.S. record of tapping efficiency as a resource, and the accelerated efforts by individuals, organizations, and governments to squeeze greater productivity from all energy sources.

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa/0409.html>

Building a Sustainable Energy Future

Draft for Public Comment

National Science Board, April 10, 2009

The fundamental transformation of the Nation's current extractive fossil fuel energy economy to a sustainable energy economy is a critical grand challenge facing the United States today. This transformation requires active U.S. Government leadership and coordination. It also requires robust support for sustainable energy research, development, demonstration, deployment, and education (RD3E) and a new U.S. energy policy framework that enables commercially attractive solutions. Together, these broad, science-driven approaches can help to promote our national security through increasing U.S. energy independence, enhance environmental stewardship and reduce energy and carbon intensity, and generate continued economic growth through innovation in energy technologies and expansion of green jobs.

In this report, the National Science Board (Board) offers key findings, recommendations to the U.S. Government, and guidance to the National Science Foundation (NSF). Collectively, these actions will initiate and sustain a transformation to a sustainable energy economy. ...

FULL REPORT: http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/publications/2009/comments_se_report.pdf (pdf)

Earth Day 2009: New Energy for America

Information Sheet, Federal Energy Management Program/ U.S. Department of Energy

March 31, 2009

The Federal Government is summoning the nation "to face one of the great challenges of our time: confronting our dependence on foreign oil, addressing the moral, economic, and environmental challenge of global climate change, and building a clean energy future that benefits all Americans." This call is the Administration's New Energy for America plan.

The 2009 Earth Day theme is New Energy for America. It showcases the potential and importance of New Energy for America as a means to stimulate our economy, protect the environment, and increase energy independence.

New Energy for America is not an abstract idea. It represents aggressive implementation of renewable projects that bring clean energy on line. It exemplifies the innovation of people harnessing the cheapest, fastest, and cleanest energy source — energy efficiency. It demonstrates the accelerated use of high-efficiency, high-performing vehicles and the increased use of alternative fuels produced right here at home. ...

Full Text: <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/femp/services/earthday.html>

American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009

Discussion Draft, March 31, 2009

Chairman Henry A. Waxman of the Energy and Commerce Committee and Chairman Edward J. Markey of the Energy and Environment Subcommittee released a draft of clean energy legislation that will create jobs, help end our dangerous dependence on foreign oil, and combat global warming. The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 (ACES) is a comprehensive approach to America's energy policy that charts a new course towards a clean energy economy.

"This legislation will create millions of clean energy jobs, put America on the path to energy independence, and cut global warming pollution," said Chairman Waxman. "Our goal is to strengthen our economy by making America the world leader in new clean energy and energy efficiency technologies."

FULL TEXT: http://energycommerce.house.gov/Press_111/20090331/acesa_discussiondraft.pdf (pdf)

Discussion Draft Summary:

http://energycommerce.house.gov/Press_111/20090331/acesa_summary.pdf (pdf)

President Obama Announces Launch of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate

Press Release, The White House

March 28, 2009

The President is pleased to announce today the launch of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate.

The Major Economies Forum will facilitate a candid dialogue among key developed and developing countries, help generate the political leadership necessary to achieve a successful outcome at the UN climate change negotiations that will convene this December in Copenhagen, and advance the exploration of concrete initiatives and joint ventures that increase the supply of clean energy while cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

President Obama has invited the leaders of 16 major economies and the Secretary General of the United Nations to designate representatives to participate in a preparatory session at the Department of State on April 27-28 in Washington, D.C. The preparatory sessions will culminate in a Major Economies Forum Leaders' meeting, which Prime Minister Berlusconi has agreed to host in La Maddalena, Italy, in July 2009. ...

FULL TEXT: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/President-Obama-Announces-Launch-of-the-Major-Economies-Forum-on-Energy-and-Climate/

U.S.-China Climate Change Leaders Meet at the State Department

Press Release, Bureau of Public Affairs/ U.S. Department of State

Washington, D.C., March 16, 2009

Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern met with Chinese Vice Chairman Xie Zhenhua of the National Development and Reform Commission of the People's Republic of China at the Department of State this morning, March 16, 2009.

The two shared views on climate change and clean energy. Among other issues, they discussed how to increase cooperation to ensure a positive outcome at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiation in Copenhagen, December 7-18, 2009.

Special Envoy Stern acknowledged the broad work that China is already doing to address climate change, including China's goals to improve energy efficiency and increase the production of energy from renewable sources. Special

Envoy Stern noted, however, that to contain climate change, both countries will have to strengthen their cooperation to combat climate change. ...

FULL TRANSCRIPT: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/03/120435.htm>

Annual Energy Outlook 2009

Energy Information Administration/ U.S. Department of Energy

March 2009

The Annual Energy Outlook 2009 (AEO2009) presents projections and analysis of US energy supply, demand, and prices through 2030. The projections are based on results from the Energy Information Administration's National Energy Modeling System. The AEO2009 includes the reference case, additional cases examining energy markets, and complete documentation.

FULL REPORT: <http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/aeo/index.html?featureclicked=1&>

Abrupt Climate Change

Final Report, Synthesis and Assessment Product 3.4

U.S. Climate Change Science Program and the Subcommittee on Global Change Research

U. S. Geological Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Science Foundation

December 2008

This report considers progress in understanding four types of abrupt change in the paleoclimatic record that stand out as being so rapid and large in their impact that if they were to recur, they would pose clear risks to society in terms of our ability to adapt: (1) rapid change in glaciers, ice sheets, and hence sea level; (2) widespread and sustained changes to the hydrologic cycle; (3) abrupt change in the northward flow of warm, salty water in the upper layers of the Atlantic Ocean associated with the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC); and (4) rapid release to the atmosphere of methane trapped in permafrost and on continental margins. ...

FULL REPORT: <http://downloads.climate-science.gov/sap/sap3-4/sap3-4-final-report-all.pdf> (pdf)

Vehicle and Engine Compliance Activities - 2007 Progress Report

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), October 2008

Welcome to the first compliance report of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ). The purpose of this report is to present a convenient reference for the environmental data we generate about "mobile sources," or moving sources of air pollution. These sources include vehicles, engines, and motorized equipment that produce exhaust and evaporative emissions. It is our job to regulate these sources of air pollution and make sure that they comply with emissions and fuel economy requirements. ...

FULL REPORT: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/about/420r08011.pdf> (pdf)

CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS

Oversight - the Environmental Protection Agency's Renewable Fuel Standard

U.S. Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works

Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety

April 1, 2009

Witnesses

Charles T. Drevna, President, National Petrochemical and Refiners Association

Kelly Tiller, Director of External Operations, University of Tennessee Office of Bioenergy Programs

Michael McAdams, President, Advanced Biofuels Association

Nathanael Greene, Director of Renewable Energy Policy, Air & Energy Department, Natural Resources Defense Council

Blake Early, Environmental Consultant, American Lung Association

FULL INFORMATION:

http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=3fdd18ff-802a-23ad-4378-d21b6beb4d5a

Preparing for Climate Change: Adaptation Polities and Programs

United States House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce

Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment

March 25, 2009

This hearing examined ongoing adaptation efforts, both domestically and internationally, and potential policies in climate change legislation that could assist in climate change adaptation efforts.

Witnesses

Tom Karl, Director of the National Climatic Data Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

John Stephenson, Director of Natural Resources and Environment, Government Accountability Office

Bishop Callon Holloway, Evangelical Lutheran Church in American, On Behalf of the National Council of Churches

Larry Schweiger, President and CEO, National Wildlife Federation

David Waskow, Climate Change Program Director, Oxfam American

E. Calvin Beisner, Ph.D., National Spokesman, The Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation

Lord Christopher Monckton, Chief Policy Adviser, Science and Public Policy Institute

FULL INFORMATION:

http://energycommerce.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1549:preparing-for-climate-change-adaptation-polities-and-programs&catid=130:subcommittee-on-energy-and-the-environment&Itemid=71

Constructing a Green Transportation Policy: Transit Modes and Infrastructure

United States House of Representatives Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global

Warming

March 19, 2009

With global warming, clean energy and job-creating infrastructure projects high on the agenda for Congress and the Obama administration, and our nation's primary transportation bill up for Congressional reauthorization, green transportation measures are gaining increasing attention. America's transportation sector is responsible for approximately one-third of our country's heat-trapping carbon emissions.

With these political and environmental factors as a backdrop, Chairman Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) and Vice Chair Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) and the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming held a hearing on how various transit modes and the methodology and materials to build our transportation system can reduce global warming and cut our dependence on oil and other fossil fuels.

Witnesses

Peter Varga, CEO, Interurban Transit Partnership, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Andy Clark, Executive Director, League of American Bicyclists

Chris Zimmerman, Arlington County, Virginia Board Member

Mr. John Boesel, President and CEO, CalStart

Don Weaver, Association of General Contractors Highway Division Chairman

Erika Guerra, Holcim (US) Inc.

Domenic G. Ruccolo, Senior Vice President, Construction and Forestry Division, John Deere

FULL INFORMATION: http://globalwarming.house.gov/pubs?id=0005#main_content

Renewable Energy: Complementary Policies for Climate Legislation

United States House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce

Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment

February 26, 2009

Electricity generated by renewable resources, such as wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal, will play a crucial role in reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing energy security, and promoting domestic economic development and job growth. This hearing addressed the potential role of renewable electricity in meeting greenhouse gas reduction targets under climate legislation and the role of complementary policies, such as a federal renewable electricity standard, in expanding renewable electricity and spurring technological development.

Witnesses

Howard K. Gruenspecht, Acting Administrator, Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy

Ron Binz, Chairman, Colorado Public Utilities Commission

Dr. Ralph Izzo, President, Chairman and CEO, Public Service Enterprise Group

Edward Lowe, General Manager, Renewables Market Division, GE

Stan Wise, Commissioner, Georgia Public Service Commission

FULL INFORMATION:

http://energycommerce.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1504&catid=130:subcommittee-on-energy-and-the-environment&Itemid=71

Update on the Latest Global Warming Science

U.S. Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works

February 25, 2009

Witnesses

R.K. Pachauri PhD, Chairman, United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Christopher Field PhD, Director, Department of Global Ecology, Carnegie Institution for Science, Stanford University;
Co-chair of Working Group II (Climate Change Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability [including North America]),
United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Howard Frumkin MD, MPH, DrPH, Director, National Center for Environmental Health, Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention

Director, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

William Happer PhD, Professor of Physics, Princeton University

FULL INFORMATION:

http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=864d3319-802a-23ad-46a0-15d3b819178d

Energy Efficiency: Complementary Policies for Climate Legislation

United States House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce

Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment

February 24, 2009

As Congress crafts comprehensive climate and energy legislation, it is critical to understand the vital role of energy efficiency in achieving climate change and energy policy objectives. This hearing explored energy efficiency policies, such as building and appliance standards and an energy efficiency resource standard, that could be incorporated into climate and energy legislation.

Witnesses

Hon. Philip Giudice, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources

Tom King, President, National Grid USA

Rich Wells, Vice President, Energy, The Dow Chemical Corporation

Iain Campbell, Vice President and General Manager, Johnson Controls Inc.

John A. Anderson, President, Electricity Consumers Resource Council

Bryan Reichel, President and CEO, PureChoice, Inc.

FULL INFORMATION:

http://energycommerce.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1500:energy-efficiency-complementary-policies-for-climate-legislation&catid=130:subcommittee-on-energy-and-the-environment&Itemid=71

Draft for a Renewable Electricity Standard Proposal

United States Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources

February 10, 2009

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on a majority staff draft for a Renewable Electricity Standard proposal.

Witnesses

Dr. Ralph Izzo, Public Service Enterprise Group

Mr. Don Furman, Senior Vice President for Business Development, Transmission and Policy, Iberdrola Renewables, Inc.

The Honorable David Wright, Commissioner, Representing SEARUC

Mr. Scott Jones, Executive Vice President, Forest Landowners Association

Dr. Lester Lave, Professor, Carnegie Mellon University

FULL INFORMATION:

http://energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=3de47fcb-99e4-e0fd-c5e6-52532f60f256

CRS REPORTS FOR CONGRESS

(published by the Congressional Research Service/Library of Congress)

Climate Change: Current Issues and Policy Tools

March 6, 2009

On June 2, 2008, the Senate agreed to consider a bill (S. 3036) to control greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. In the 111th Congress, leadership in both chambers have announced their intentions to pass bills in 2009 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These actions are indicative of the pressures Members of Congress increasingly face on whether and how to address human-induced climate change. Contentious debates scrutinize issues of science, economics, values, geopolitics and a host of other concerns. Deliberations also weigh the appropriateness of alternative policy tools and program designs. The economic stakes are potentially large—with both the costs of controls and the “costs of inaction” ranging, by some estimates, into trillions of dollars over several decades. ...

FULL TEXT: http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL34513_20090306.pdf (pdf)

Energy Provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5)

March 3, 2009

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, P.L. 111-5) emphasizes jobs, economic recovery, and assistance to those most impacted by the recession. It also stresses investments in technology, transportation, environmental protection, and other infrastructure and proposes strategies to stabilize state and local government budgets. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/121927.pdf> (pdf)

Alternative Fuels and Advanced Technology Vehicles: Issues in Congress

February 13, 2009

Alternative fuels and advanced technology vehicles are seen by proponents as integral to improving urban air quality, decreasing dependence on foreign oil, and reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. However, major barriers—especially economics—currently prevent the widespread use of these fuels and technologies. Because of these barriers, and the potential benefits, there is continued congressional interest in providing incentives and other support for their development and commercialization.

Alternative fuels and advanced technology vehicles have been addressed early in the 111th Congress, as both the House and Senate versions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (H.R. 1) contained provisions supporting their development and deployment. While some of these provisions were removed in conference, the final version still contains provisions for tax incentives, federal grants and loans, and other federal support for alternative fuels and advanced vehicles.

The 111th Congress is likely to further discuss alternative fuels and advanced technology vehicles as it addresses other key topics. These include their role in any federal policy to address climate change, and their role in federal energy policy. ...

FULL TEXT: http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40168_20090213.pdf (pdf)

U.S. Global Climate Change Policy: Evolving Views on Cost, Competitiveness, and Comprehensiveness

January 29, 2009

U.S. policy toward global climate change evolved from a “study only” to a more “study and action” orientation in 1992 with ratification of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Convention committed developed countries to aim at returning their greenhouse gas emissions to their 1990 levels by the year 2000. The U.S. decision to ratify the UNFCCC reflected both the nonbinding nature of the accord and analyses that suggested that the United States could achieve the necessary reduction at little or no cost. Under the UNFCCC, developed countries were to adopt national plans and policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The United States submitted such plans in 1992, 1994, 1997, 2002, and 2006. ...

FULL TEXT: http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL30024_20090129.pdf (pdf)

Automobile and Light Truck Fuel Economy: The CAFE Standards

January 27, 2009

On April 22, 2008, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NOPR) that would establish fuel economy standards for model year (MY) 2011-MY2015 passenger cars and light trucks. The rulemaking follows up on the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA, P.L. 110-

140), enacted in mid-December 2007, which restructured the automotive fuel economy program. It established a corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standard of 35 miles per gallon (mpg) by MY2020 for the combined passenger automobile and light truck fleet. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/120606.pdf> (pdf)

Selected Issues Related to an Expansion of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS)

January 23, 2009

High petroleum and gasoline prices, concerns over global climate change, and the desire to promote domestic rural economies have greatly increased interest in biofuels as an alternative to petroleum in the U.S. transportation sector. Biofuels, most notably corn ethanol, have grown significantly in the past few years as a component of U.S. motor fuel supply. Ethanol, the most commonly used biofuel, is blended in more than half of all U.S. gasoline (at the 10% level or lower in most cases). However, current biofuels supply of 6.8 billion gallons only represents about 4% of total vehicle fuel demand.

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA, P.L. 110-140) requires ever-larger amounts of biofuels produced from feedstocks other than corn starch, including sugarcane, oil crops, and cellulose, and promotes the development of these fuels. ...

FULL TEXT: http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40155_20090123.pdf (pdf)

Biofuels Incentives: A Summary of Federal Programs

January 5, 2009

With recent high energy prices, the passage of major energy legislation in 2005 (P.L. 109-58) and 2007 (P.L. 110-140), and the passage of a new Farm Bill in 2008 (P.L. 110-246) there is ongoing congressional interest in promoting alternatives to petroleum fuels. Biofuels—transportation fuels produced from plants and other organic materials—are of particular interest. Ethanol and biodiesel, the two most widely used biofuels, receive significant government support under federal law in the form of mandated fuel use, tax incentives, loan and grant programs, and certain regulatory requirements. The 24 programs and provisions listed in this report have been established over the past 28 years, and are administered by five separate agencies and departments: Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Department of Energy, Internal Revenue Service, and Customs and Border Protection. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/116601.pdf> (pdf)

Global Climate Change: Three Policy Perspectives

Updated November 26, 2008

The 1992 U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change requires that signatories, including the United States, establish policies for constraining future emission levels of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide (CO₂). The George H. W. Bush, Clinton, and George W. Bush Administrations each drafted action plans in response to requirements of the convention. These plans have raised significant controversy and debate. ...

This paper examines three starting points from which a U.S. response to the convention is being framed. These starting points, or policy “lenses,” lead to divergent perceptions of the issue with respect to uncertainty, urgency, costs, and government roles. They also imply differing but overlapping processes and actions for possible implementation, thus shaping recommendations of policy advocates concerning the federal government’s role in reducing greenhouse gases.

...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/98-738.pdf> (pdf)

AMERICA.GOV ITEMS

(published by the Bureau of International Information Programs/U.S. Department of State)

United States, Mexico to Strive for Clean Energy Economies

April 17, 2009

Washington — The United States and Mexico have formed a partnership to create clean energy economies and reduce the effects of global warming.

“Together, we’re establishing a new bilateral framework on clean energy and climate change that will focus on creating green jobs, promoting renewable energy, and enhancing energy efficiency,” President Obama said at a joint press conference April 16 with Mexican President Felipe Calderón in Mexico City. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2009/April/20090417100411dmslahrellek0.1906092.html?CP.rss=true>

Greenhouse Gas Cuts Now Could Lessen Climate Change Effects

Slashing emissions by 70 percent may limit most dangerous consequences

April 16, 2009

Washington — Cutting emissions of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide (CO₂) by 70 percent during the 21st century could help nations worldwide avoid the most dangerous potential consequences of climate change, according to a new study by scientists at the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Colorado. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/energy-english/2009/April/200904161631051cnirellep0.843487.html&distid=ucs>

U.S. Smart Grid Effort Requires New Technologies, Partnerships

Work is beginning to determine grid architecture and key standards

April 13, 2009

Washington — Up ahead in the smart-grid future, an intelligent system will work with consumers to save energy, produce electricity from a range of renewable sources, anticipate its own failures, see to its own repairs, store energy out on the grid and provide a fueling system for a new generation of electric vehicles. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/energy-english/2009/April/200904131503031cnirellep0.5590479.html&distid=ucs>

Technology Demonstration Projects Pave Way for U.S. Smart Grid

Advanced tools and techniques showcased in teams nationwide

April 10, 2009

Washington — Around the United States, teams of utility companies, universities, national laboratories, state regulators and private companies are developing and demonstrating on a limited scale some of the key technologies that will eventually make up the 21st-century version of the nation's aging electric power infrastructure.

These pilot projects are part of a larger national effort, supported by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and a multi-agency Smart Grid Task Force, to turn the old grid — even as it keeps lights on and systems running for 142 million homes, businesses and government facilities — into a smart grid. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/energy-english/2009/April/200904101656511cnirellep0.5464398.html>

U.S. Electric System Begins Long Transformation to a Smart Grid

National modernization effort faces regulatory and technical challenges

April 9, 2009

Washington — Following the lead of some European and Pacific Rim nations, U.S. government technical and regulatory agencies, electric utilities, energy service providers and private companies are working to turn the nation's century-old electric power grid into a 21st-century "smart grid."

The job involves transforming a patchwork infrastructure — built, for the most part, before microprocessors retooled the industrial landscape — into an interoperable distributed network that interacts with consumers, detects and fixes its own problems and seamlessly integrates solar, wind and other renewable energy sources. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/energy-english/2009/April/200904091618251cnirellep0.2290308.html>

United States to Host Climate Change Forum in April

Representatives from 16 nations asked to join forum

March 30, 2009

Washington — The United States has invited 16 major economies to a forum in April to discuss climate change and clean energy ventures, the White House said.

The April 27–28 meeting in Washington is designed to culminate in a leaders' meeting on the sidelines of the G8 Summit in July in La Maddalena, Italy. Ultimately, it aims to help negotiators reach an accord later in the year. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2009/March/20090330143505dmslahrellek0.1715662.html&distid=ucs>

Latest Climate Change Science Indicates Worsening Effects Ahead

New findings show rising CO₂, melting Arctic ice, a warming Antarctic

March 2, 2009

Washington — In 2007, the governments and scientists who contributed to the *Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (IPCC) agreed that global warming was unequivocal, already happening and almost surely due to human activity.

Since then, a range of scientific studies have updated some of the IPCC findings, showing that the pace of climate change, at least in terms of increasing carbon dioxide emissions, melting Arctic ice and warming in Antarctica, might be faster than the scientists initially estimated. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/env-english/2009/March/20090302165011lcniirellep0.8701288.html&distid=ucs>

Advances in Technology Position Biofuels for Clean Future

But industry must address concerns about compromising food availability

February 25, 2009

Washington – Biomass has been a reliable, simple source of power since early humans burned their first logs at least 400,000 years ago. Today, driven by an urgent need to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, technology advances are bringing biomass into the future.

Many hail biofuels, an important subset of biomass, as clean, renewable alternatives to fossil fuels for transportation. Others say biofuels, like ethanol from corn, compromise world cropland and food availability, and that nonfood technology fixes for such problems are too many years in the future. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/env-english/2008/February/20080225140244lcniirellep0.8307154.html>

Obama Makes Climate Change a National Priority

U.S. technical agencies prepare to help regions understand local effects

January 27, 2009

Washington — Climate change is a planetary process, but its effects — sea level rise, shrinking glaciers, changes in plant and animal distribution, early-blooming trees, permafrost thaws — are regional and local.

Some of the effects are already occurring, and the newly installed Obama administration, in power for just more than a week, is moving fast to put the United States in a leadership position to work with nations of the world and meet the challenges of climate change and energy security. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/env-english/2009/January/20090127161856lcniirellep9.743899e-02.html&distid=ucs>

Obama Sets Bold New Principles for U.S. Energy, Climate Policies

President moves to reverse some policies of his predecessor

January 26, 2009

Washington — President Obama vowed the United States will lead the global fight against global warming as he moved emphatically to overturn Bush administration energy and climate change policies.

“We will make it clear to the world that America is ready to lead,” Obama said at the White House on January 26. During his campaign, Obama promised to fight global warming, cut energy consumption and reduce U.S. dependence on foreign energy sources.

FULL TEXT: <http://www.america.gov/st/econ-english/2009/January/20090126181729cpataruk0.8505976.html&distid=ucs>

USEFUL LINKS

- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

<http://www.epa.gov/>

EPA leads the nation's environmental science, research, education and assessment efforts. The mission of the Environmental Protection Agency is to protect human health and the environment. Since 1970, EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people.

- **Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ)**
<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/>
 EPA's Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) protects public health and the environment by regulating air pollution from motor vehicles, engines, and the fuels used to operate them, and by encouraging travel choices that minimize emissions. These "mobile sources" include cars and light trucks, heavy trucks and buses, nonroad recreational vehicles (such as dirt bikes and snowmobiles), farm and construction machines, lawn and garden equipment, marine engines, aircraft, and locomotives.
- **National Clean Diesel Campaign**
<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/diesel/index.htm>
 Reducing emissions from diesel engines is one of the most important air quality challenges facing the country today. EPA established the National Clean Diesel Campaign (NCDC) to promote diesel emission reduction strategies. NCDC includes regulatory programs to address new diesel engines as well as innovative programs to address the millions of diesel engines already in use.
- **Fuel Economy**
<http://www.epa.gov/fueleconomy/>
- **Regulation & Standards**
<http://www.epa.gov/fueleconomy/regulations.htm>
- The White House
 - **The Agenda: Energy and the Environment**
http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/energy_and_environment/
 The energy challenges our country faces are severe and have gone unaddressed for far too long. Our addiction to foreign oil doesn't just undermine our national security and wreak havoc on our environment -- it cripples our economy and strains the budgets of working families all across America. President Obama and Vice President Biden have a comprehensive plan to invest in alternative and renewable energy, end our addiction to foreign oil, address the global climate crisis and create millions of new jobs.
 - **Council on Environmental Quality**
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/>
 The Council on Environmental Quality coordinates federal environmental efforts and works closely with agencies and other White House offices in the development of environmental policies and initiatives. The Council's Chair serves as the principal environmental policy adviser to the President. In addition, CEQ reports annually to the President on the state of the environment; oversees federal agency implementation of the environmental impact assessment process; and acts as a referee when agencies disagree over the adequacy of such assessments.
 - **Office of Science & Technology Policy**
<http://www.ostp.gov/>
 The Office of Science and Technology Policy advises the President on the effects of science and technology on domestic and international affairs. The office serves as a source of scientific and technological analysis and judgment for the President with respect to major policies, plans and programs of the Federal Government. OSTP leads an interagency effort to develop and implement sound science and technology policies and budgets. The office works with the private sector to ensure Federal investments in science and technology contribute to economic prosperity, environmental quality, and national security.
 - Energy/Environment**
http://www.ostp.gov/cs/issues/energy_environment
 Of all the challenges we face as a nation and as a planet, none is as pressing as the three-pronged challenge of climate change, sustainable development and the need to foster new and cleaner sources of energy. The Obama administration and the Office of Science and Technology Policy are committed to addressing this looming issue aggressively, intelligently and in a way that will not only minimize the negative impacts of past policy failings but also strengthen our economy and enhance our national security.
 That is why we have set a goal of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. It takes harnessing the best science and technology and ensuring evidence-based policy decisions.
- *America.gov* – Bureau of International Information Programs/U.S. Department of State
 - **Energy & Environment – Protecting Our Natural Resources**
<http://www.america.gov/global/environ.html>
 - **Science & Technology – Seeking and Sharing Knowledge**

<http://www.america.gov/global/science.html>

- **Climate Change and Environment** – U.S. Embassy Vienna
<http://www.usembassy.at/en/policy/envIRON.htm>
- **U.S. Department of Energy**
<http://www.energy.gov/>
 - **Transportation**
<http://www.energy.gov/energyefficiency/transportation.htm>
The Department of Energy is committed to developing alternative fuels and the infrastructure to support their commercialization.
 - **Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy**
<http://www.eere.energy.gov/>
 - **Vehicles Technologies Program**
<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/vehiclesandfuels/index.html>
The Vehicle Technologies Program is developing more energy efficient and environmentally friendly highway transportation technologies that will enable America to use less petroleum. The long-term aim is to develop "leap frog" technologies that will provide Americans with greater freedom of mobility and energy security, while lowering costs and reducing impacts on the environment.
 - **Clean Cities**
<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/cleancities/>
Clean Cities strives to advance the nation's economic, environmental, and energy security by supporting local decisions to adopt practices that contribute to the reduction of petroleum consumption. Clean Cities has a network of approximately 90 volunteer coalitions, which develop public/private partnerships to promote alternative fuels and advanced vehicles, fuel blends, fuel economy, hybrid vehicles, and idle reduction.
 - **Alternative Fuels & Advanced Vehicles Data Center**
<http://www.afdc.energy.gov/afdc/>
 - **Energy Information Administration (EIA) – Official Energy Statistics from the U.S. Government**
<http://www.eia.doe.gov/>
 - **Fuel Economy**
<http://www.fueleconomy.gov/>
- **U.S. Department of State**
Climate Change
<http://www.state.gov/g/oes/climate/index.htm>
The United States is taking a leading role in addressing climate change by advancing an ever-expanding suite of measures. We have initiated a number of policies and partnerships that span a wide range of initiatives from reducing our emissions at home to developing transformational low-carbon technologies to improving observations systems that will help us better understand and address the possible impacts of climate change. Our efforts emphasize the importance of results-driven action both internationally and domestically.
- **European Union**
Activities of the European Union – Energy
http://europa.eu/pol/ener/index_en.htm
Energy is central to our lives. We rely on it for transport, for heating and cooling our homes, and running our factories, farms and offices. However, fossil fuel is a finite resource and is a major cause of global warming. So we can no longer take energy from fossil fuels for granted. We must create an integrated energy and environment policy based on clear targets and timetables for moving to a low-carbon economy and saving energy.
- **Pew Center on Global Climate Change**
<http://www.pewclimate.org/>

- **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change**
<http://www.ipcc.ch/>
- **The World Bank – Climate Change**
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/ENVIRONMENT/EXTCC/0,,menuPK:407870~pagePK:149018~piPK:149093~theSitePK:407864,00.html>

ARTICLES

(for full text please contact the American Reference Center at: arc@usembassy.at)

Communicating Climate Change: Why Frames Matter for Public Engagement

By Matthew C. Nisbet, *Environment*, March/April 2009

Optimists hope that the time has finally arrived in the United States for major policy action on climate change. Fueling expectations, U.S. President Barack Obama has assembled a team of climate experts who are working with Congress, states, and foreign governments to propose legislation and broker international agreements. Although the Obama administration is committed to addressing climate change, the necessary level of public engagement with the issue still appears to be missing. Reframing global warming to emphasize its immediate effects and relevancy will lead to a better public understanding of—and ideally collective action on—climate change.

Can Europe Catalyze Climate Action?

By Jason Anderson, *Current History*, March 2009

Global warming is an issue that cries out for central policy coordination, and in many respects policy making in this area has paved the way for EU cooperation. Combating climate change is frequently cited as the preeminent global environmental challenge we now face. Successfully averting the worst effects of global warming will require technical, political, economic, and social changes of a kind never seen before, and will put political will severely to the test. For its part, the European Union has considered itself a leader in climate policy for nearly two decades—both in developing domestic emissions reduction measures and in pushing forward global agreements in the United Nations. This leadership has been particularly evident during the past eight years, as the United States has stood on the sidelines.

Post-Hegemonic Climate Politics?

By Matthew Paterson, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, February 2009

The article argues that the effects of a new US president on global climate politics will be rather less than might be expected. This is partly because the rhetorical differences between Bush, his predecessor Clinton and President Obama mask great continuities in US climate change politics since the early 1990s. It is also because, unlike in other issue areas, the EU has moved into a position of clear international leadership, which is likely to provoke diplomatic conflict, both for standard reasons of realpolitik but more precisely because of the different growth strategies pursued by each side and the different implications of those strategies for climate policy. Finally, the emergence of a dense pattern of transnational climate governance will increasingly constrain the options for either side in pursuing new climate change agreements after 2012.

Auto Industry's Future - Can Energy-Efficient Vehicles Revive the Big Three?

CQ Researcher, February 6, 2009

As U.S. automakers post steep declines in profits amid a global credit crisis and a worldwide slowdown in vehicle sales, policy experts are debating their long-term prospects. General Motors and Chrysler received billions of dollars in emergency federal loans and are under intense government pressure to find a path toward profitability. Ford lost a record amount last year but insists it can survive without federal help. Management and the United Auto Workers union argue that letting even one automobile giant fail would have catastrophic consequences for the U.S. economy. Skeptics say, however, that automakers have had years to reform themselves and that without steep cost reductions, more union concessions and major sacrifices by dealers and suppliers, the industry's future is dim. Both domestic and foreign automakers are pouring resources into a new generation of electric and hybrid vehicles they hope will revive the industry.

The Myth of the Efficient Car

By Alec Dubro, *The Progressive*, posted February 2, 2009

Developing fuel-efficient cars may be good for business, job creation and reinvigorating a struggling economy, but it is a myth to think that building more cars, efficient or otherwise, will reduce global pollution, according to Alec Dubro of *The Progressive*. "Increasing fuel efficiency has never led to an overall reduction in pollutants -- in fact, efficiency has always led to more production and consumption," Dubro writes. He cites the widely-observed paradox that the more efficient machines become, the more energy they use because they are more widely used, noting that "people everywhere are buying more of the better, cheaper, more efficient cars and are driving them more." The only solution is to abandon the personal automobile, the author states. He notes that, because of their mass, "cars don't move people, cars move cars" -- even proposed lightweight hypercars are several times the driver's body weight, and would still require the existing infrastructure of roads, bridges, parking areas and energy distribution. Dubro advocates developing the "20-minute neighborhood" where home, work, shopping and recreation are all within walking distance.

FULL TEXT: <http://www.progressive.org/mag/mpdubro020309.html>

Think Again: Climate Change

By Bill McKibben, *Foreign Policy*, January/February 2009

Noted author Bill McKibben writes that it may be too late to avert climate change, but that it is imperative that the international political order stop delaying and adopt the few options humanity has left. He notes that there is no doubt left among the scientific community that global warming is a reality; many scientists feel that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's latest report is too conservative. The claims that agriculture will improve in some regions as frost recedes may hold true for a while, but eventually the threat of heat stress and drought will be global. Solving the climate crisis is no longer an option, as human activities have already raised the global temperature by a degree; all we can do is mitigate its worst aspects. Coordinating this effort with every country on earth will be "far and away the biggest foreign-policy challenge we face."

FULL TEXT: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4585&page=0

Confronting Warming - Can States and Localities Prevent Climate Change?

CQ Researcher, January 9, 2009

Growing concern about climate change has led states and cities to adopt new policies to try to conserve energy and reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. California recently adopted new rules that aim to reduce such gases by 30 percent by 2020, while a cap on carbon emissions in the Northeast took effect Jan. 1. But critics say the efforts are more symbolic than substantive, pushing real sacrifices far off into the future. Many business groups, meanwhile, complain that the new rules will increase the cost of energy and hurt the economy — despite current promises that a "Green New Deal" can create jobs. The Obama administration promises to be far more aggressive in addressing global warming than the skeptical Bush White House. Even though the issue is coming to the fore in Washington, states and cities that have filled the policy vacuum in recent years pledge to stay vigilant in addressing the issue.

Oil Jitters - Are the Days of Cheap Oil Gone Forever?

CQ Researcher, January 4, 2009

Vastly increased demand for oil in rapidly modernizing China and India, warfare and instability in the Middle East and the weakening U.S. dollar have revived fears of a new energy crisis. Gasoline shortages — and the accompanying lines at gas stations — were thought to have ended with the Jimmy Carter administration. But as 2008 began, American drivers were paying more than \$3 a gallon, and crude oil hit a milestone — \$100 a barrel. Some oil experts warn of even bigger price shocks to come as oil-producing nations use more and more of their own oil, and energy demand jumps 50 percent by 2030. Some experts predict an oil "production crunch" within four to five years that will have severe geopolitical and economic impacts, and one expert says the energy supply-demand gap could create "social chaos and war" by 2020. In any event, the days of cheap, plentiful oil appear to be over, and motorists may have to learn how to conserve energy.

Reducing Your Carbon Footprint - Can Individual Actions Reduce Global Warming?

CQ Researcher, December 5, 2008

As climate change rises closer to the top of the government's policy agenda — and an economic crisis intensifies — more and more consumers are trying to change their behavior so they pollute and consume less. To reduce their individual "carbon footprints," many are cutting gasoline and home-heating consumption, choosing locally grown food and recycling. While such actions are important in curbing global warming, the extent to which consumers can reduce or reverse broad-scale environmental damage is open to debate. Moreover, well-intentioned personal actions can have

unintended consequences that cancel out positive effects. To have the greatest impact, corporate and government policy must lead the way, many environmental advocates say.

Containing Climate Change: An Opportunity for U.S. Leadership

By Carter F. Bales and Richard D. Duke, *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2008

Both presidential candidates have expressed willingness to limit carbon emissions. Bales, an energy consultant, and Duke, the Director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Center for Market Innovation, have devised a four-part system for decreasing carbon pollution. The "cap-and-invest" strategy would need to be enacted by Congress and would result in increased funding for newer environmental technologies and a system of carbon-trading. A recent study by McKinsey & Company suggests that the cost of reducing US emissions by 2030 will be close to zero with the proposed plan. The authors go on to discuss a larger plan to involve the rest of the world in a system for reducing carbon emissions that requires polluting nations to buy allowances from less-developed nations, injecting cash into the economies of developing countries.

The Short List: The Most Effective Actions U.S. Households Can Take to Curb Climate Change

By Gerald Gardner and Paul Stern, *Environment*, September/October 2008

Individual efforts represent a "huge reservoir of potential for reducing carbon emissions and mitigating climate change," according to the authors. About 38 percent of national carbon emissions come from U.S. households. More energy-efficient choices in household and motor vehicle technologies can make a more rapid and direct difference than policy revisions that take time and negotiation. The public needs better and more accurate advice on the most effective conservation measures individuals can take. Efficiency-improving actions save more energy than limiting use of inefficient equipment, studies find, and home upgrades can result in significant savings and reduction of carbon emissions. Government policies can assist by providing simple guides and incentives for "going green."

Hot Air and Cold Facts

By Bruce Berkowitz, *The American Interest*, September/October 2008

The global warming debate has raged for more than a decade, at its most extreme pitting crusaders warning the end of the world is nigh against naysayers proclaiming the whole thing a hoax. The debate can still get quite heated at times (so to speak) but over the past few years a middle ground has emerged in which most scientific and economic experts concede that humans are having some kind of effect on the climate. It is not clear just what we can do about it, however, and, in any case, none of the options are free. Meanwhile, pundits and public officials alike fail to recognize—or paper over—many of the basic, unavoidable choices they will have to make.

FULL TEXT: <http://www.the-american-interest.com/article.cfm?piece=463>

THINK TANK ITEMS

(for full text please contact the American Reference Center at: arc@usembassy.at)

Putting U.S. Cars on the High Road to Recovery

By Susan Helper, The Brookings Institution, March 4, 2009

The author, Helper, says putting the U.S. auto industry on the high road to recovery will require more than a quick financial fix. It will require sustained cooperation between government and the industry around fundamental issues: what kinds of cars are made and how they are made.

FULL TEXT: http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0304_auto_industry_wial.aspx

The Long and Winding Road: Automotive Fuel Economy and American Politics

By Pietro S. Nivola, The Brookings Institution, February 25, 2009

The United States has been largely unsuccessful in reducing its petroleum consumption by regulating the fuel economy of motor vehicles. Pietro Nivola proposes a move towards a comprehensive carbon tax, which could reduce gasoline consumption more effectively and curtail carbon emissions from other, more damaging sources.

FULL TEXT:

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2009/0225_cafe_nivola/0225_cafe_nivola.pdf

Smart Choices for Biofuels

By Jane Earley and Alice McKeown, Joint Project of the Sierra Club and the Worldwatch Institute, February 18, 2009

The report highlights the need for policy reforms at this critical juncture in America's effort to increase the use of biofuels. It outlines the economic and environmental impacts of first-generation biofuels such as corn ethanol, proposes strategies to make the biofuels industry more sustainable, and offers specific policy recommendations.

FULL TEXT: <http://www.worldwatch.org/files/pdf/biofuels.pdf> (pdf)

Fuel Efficiency Standards: A Detour from the Cheapest Climate Protection

By Adele Morris, The Brookings Institution, February 3, 2009

President Obama recently announced his administration would consider California's request for higher fuel efficiency standards as part of new efforts on climate change.

Yet would improved standards really make a difference in the climate change challenge? Adele Morris examines the issues in-depth, and considers how increased regulatory standards would stack up against the other proposals being considered by the new administration and Congress.

FULL TEXT: http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0203_climate_change_morris.aspx

Technology Policies to Address Climate Change

Congressional Policy Brief, Pew Center on Global Climate Change, November 2008

This brief presents public policy tools available to provide support for research, development, demonstration, and deployment (RDD&D) of technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. An emissions price induced by a cap-and-trade program can provide an incentive to "pull" new technology into the marketplace, while public funding for technology can provide a "push" with the two approaches more powerful in tandem than either alone. Economic theory provides the rationale for public expenditure on RDD&D, which can compensate for several market failures that would otherwise generate sub-optimal investments from the private sector. The appropriate policy tool depends on the stage of development for a particular technology and the scale of a project. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/DDCF-Technology.pdf> (pdf)

Policies to Reduce Emissions from the Transportation Sector

Congressional Policy Brief, Pew Center on Global Climate Change, November 2008

This brief discusses public policy tools available to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the transportation sector. Reducing GHG emissions from transportation, which comprise one third of total U.S. CO₂ emissions, will need to be a key part of any strategy to limit economy-wide emissions. Transportation energy use and emissions are determined by three elements: the fuels used to power the vehicles, characteristics of the vehicles themselves, and total miles traveled. Of the various transportation modes, passenger vehicles consume the most energy, followed by truck, rail and ship transport of freight, and then air travel. To reduce emissions, the sector can be included in a multi-sector cap-and-trade program or managed through sector-specific measures, or both. The critical issues for transportation policy are understanding market imperfections, where individuals are somewhat insensitive to changes in fuel price and tend to undervalue fuel economy. ...

FULL TEXT: <http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/DDCF-Transportation.pdf> (pdf)

Green Recovery: A Program to Create Good Jobs and Start Building a Low-Carbon Economy

By Robert Pollin, Heidi Garrett-Peltier, James Heintz, and Helen Scharber, Center for American Progress, September 2008

As America confronts the current energy crisis, the report shows that the U.S. can create two million jobs by investing in clean energy technologies that will strengthen the economy and fight global warming. It finds that investing in clean energy would create four times as many jobs as spending the same amount of money within the oil industry. The program could be paid for with proceeds from auctions of carbon permits under a global warming cap-and-trade program that will drive private investments into clean energy and raise public revenue through carbon permit auctions.

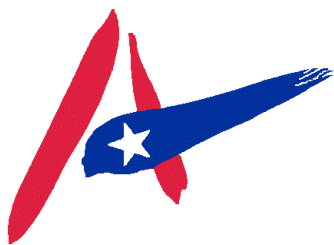
FULL TEXT: http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/09/pdf/green_recovery.pdf (pdf)

Please visit the homepage of the U.S. Embassy Vienna, Austria at: <http://www.usembassy.at>



The program page on **“Clean Fuel and Vehicle Policies in the U.S., the EU and China”** will be available at:
<http://www.usembassy.at/en/embassy/photo/leaf.htm>.

Information about the services and resources of the American Reference Center is available at:
<http://www.usembassy.at/en/embassy/arc.htm>



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<http://www.usembassy.at/en/embassy/photo/leaf.htm>. For printouts of items referred to in this brief
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