



Governor
Chris Gregoire

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BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE FOR WASHINGTON FAMILIES

POLICY BRIEF

LEADING THE WAY ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Washington is a national leader in addressing climate change. New legislation will help guide Washington's efforts to reduce climate-changing greenhouse gases and build a clean-energy economy.

Governor Gregoire has taken significant actions to lead Washington's response to the climate change challenge, including setting important goals for reducing greenhouse gases. Washington is especially vulnerable to climate change. Our economy depends on natural resources, tourism, and the quality of life our environment offers employers who want to bring their businesses and jobs here. We depend on snow pack for summer stream flows that feed our rivers, hydroelectricity, and much of our public water supply. Our nearly 3,000 miles of coastline and dozens of coastal communities are vulnerable to the expected rise in sea levels.



In February 2007, the Governor issued her Climate Change Challenge Executive Order, which established realistic, achievable goals for reductions in greenhouse gases; set a goal of tripling existing jobs in clean-energy fields by 2020; and created a goal of reducing expenditures on imported fuel by 20 percent by 2020. She also directed the Departments of Ecology and Community, Trade and Economic Development to form the Climate Advisory Team to help shape recommendations for actions and strategies needed to achieve these goals. Developed by community and business leaders, the Climate Advisory Team will present their report to the Governor in early February 2008.

Also in February 2007, she and the governors of four other U.S. states and the premier of British Columbia established the Western Climate Initiative to set a regional emissions reduction goal and design a regional market-based system by August 2008 to help achieve the reduction goal. More U.S. states, Canadian provinces and Mexican states have signed on to this regional effort as participants and observers.

In May 2007, Governor Gregoire signed her emissions and job creation goals into law and established a performance standard for new power plants that curbs greenhouse gas emissions.

The Governor has taken other significant actions to reduce greenhouse gases in Washington, including championing "clean car" standards, and establishing appliance standards, stronger building codes, incentives for solar power, and more. As a result, Washington is recognized nationally not only as a leader in environmental policy, but also as a top five state in the nation to do business.

Now Governor Gregoire proposes new legislation to ensure we meet reduction goals for greenhouse gas emissions and to spur growth of the clean-energy economy. This legislation:

- Establishes a program for limiting and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Designs a regional market-based system to help meet those emissions limits.
- Requires large greenhouse gases emitters, such as industrial sites and vehicle fleet operators, to report their emissions.
- Creates a workforce development and training program to grow living-wage, clean-energy jobs.



DEVELOPING A PROGRAM TO REDUCE EMISSIONS

Governor Gregoire knows that the state must be accountable for achieving real greenhouse gas reductions if we are to do our part to reduce the impact of climate change. The state will be responsible for making sure we meet those emission reductions and for recommending ways to achieve them if we are not on track. Our greenhouse gas emissions reduction limits: return to 1990 levels by 2020, achieve a 25 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2035, and achieve a 50 percent reduction below 1990 by 2050.

DESIGNING A REGIONAL MARKET-BASED SYSTEM

Washington state, in conjunction with the Western Climate Initiative, will design a regional market-based system, such as a carbon cap-and-trade program, to help meet emissions limits. That system will be fair, simple and clear for all, and will minimize economic and local impacts. The system must stimulate investments, especially in low-carbon technologies, reward innovations that lead to long-term greenhouse gas reductions and provide recognition and incentives for participants who take early actions to reduce their emissions.

MAKING THE SYSTEM WORK

The Legislature must approve the market-based system design, which will then become effective by January 1, 2012. This will allow Washington businesses and citizens to have adequate time and opportunities to be able to take advantage of the low carbon economy and to make necessary investments in low carbon technology.

REQUIRING THE REPORTING OF EMISSIONS

To track our progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we need to have a comprehensive inventory and a fair and accurate reporting system. Governor Gregoire's proposal requires large stationary sources of greenhouse gases (such as industries) and mobile

sources (such as operators of vehicle fleets) to report their emissions. That way, we can be sure that reductions are real and are meeting our state's emission limits.

GROWING THE CLEAN-ENERGY ECONOMY

Working with industry, workers, educational institutions and workforce investment boards, the state will identify high-demand green industries to target and grow. This clean-energy jobs growth initiative will help reach our goal of increasing clean-energy sector jobs to 25,000 from the 2004 level of 8,400. The initiative will help guide efforts to identify and grow high-wage jobs in clean industries, and to provide needed education, training and financial support.