



## GLOBAL WARMING POLLUTION REDUCTION ACT (S. 309)

Global warming is one of the greatest conservation issues we face today. Rising sea levels, melting ice, droughts, and habitat change and destruction threaten species in the US and around the world. Scientists warn that we must drastically reduce global warming pollutants by mid-century to halt and reverse global warming trends. Defenders of Wildlife supports solutions that will immediately and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions to avoid the worst consequences of global warming.



The Global Warming Pollution Reduction Act (S. 309), introduced by Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA) is a forward-looking, science-based bill that sets targets and requires actions necessary to avoid the most catastrophic consequences of global warming. By increasing reliance on renewable energy sources and energy efficiency, this bill will have far-reaching positive impacts, including reducing air pollution, creating new jobs, and reducing our dependence on oil.

### Pollution Reduction Targets

Scientists tell us that we are near a “tipping point” beyond which drastic climate changes will be unavoidable. This point is recognized as a 2°F increase above today’s global average. To stay below this point, we have to stabilize concentrations of global warming pollutants at 450ppm (parts per million) by 2100.

This bill establishes pollution reduction targets that aim to keep temperatures below this dangerous tipping point. Under this bill, emissions levels are set at 2010 levels and then gradually reduced through 2050. From 2010 to 2020, emissions are cut roughly 2% per year, resulting in reductions to 1990 levels. By 2050, emissions targets are set at 80% below 1990 levels, with interim targets also outlined for 2030 and 2040.

### Balanced Approach to Pollution Reductions

To reach these targets, this bill calls for increased reliance on clean, renewable energy sources, improved energy efficiency, and clean cars. It also allows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a flexible “cap and trade” program that would allow companies to meet emissions reductions targets.

*Renewable Energy* – Requires that 20% of electricity be generated from renewable energy sources by 2020 and that utilities reduce energy consumption 9% by 2020.

*Energy Efficiency Standards* – Requires that utilities reduce energy consumption by 9% by 2020 and outlines specific reductions during peak energy use period.

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*Clean Cars Standard* – Sets standards for reducing global warming emissions from motor vehicles, including cars, light-, medium-, and heavy-duty trucks by model year 2016.

*Renewable Fuel Standard* – By 2015, the bill states that a minimum of 5 billion gallons of fuel per year be derived from “low-carbon renewable fuel,” defined as fuel derived from renewable sources that achieve a reduction in global warming pollutants of at least 75% as compared with gasoline.

*Cap and Trade Program* – Allows EPA to design a cap-and-trade system if deemed necessary. Cap and trade systems sets a cap on global warming emissions and allow polluters to meet the cap by buying and selling pollution allowances, which can be likened to pollution permits. Funds generated

from allowances sales are to be used for public benefit and transition assistance, including for fish and wildlife affected by a changing climate.

*Standards for Power Plants* – Sets mandatory standards for greenhouse gas emissions for all power plants built after 2012 with a compliance date of 2016. By 2030, final standards will apply to all power plants, regardless of construction date.

*Incorporates Climate Change in Environmental Impact Statements* – Requires environmental impact statements or similar analyses undertaken under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) take into account both the project’s impact on global warming pollution emissions and how the project will be affected by climate change.

## **Periodic Scientific Review**

The bill also calls for the National Academy of Sciences to review and report findings to EPA and Congress, every 3 years, progress towards reducing global warming pollutants. Allows for accelerated reductions measures if atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases exceed 450 ppm.

## **Global Warming Pollution Reduction Act (S. 309) Lead Sponsors – Senators Sanders (I-VT) and Boxer (D-CA) Cosponsor List (6/22/07)**

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