



INSPIRING AMERICANS TO PROTECT WILDLIFE FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE.

Fact Sheet



Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act of 2009 *Overview of Bill Released 9/30/09*

Recognizing that our dependency on fossil fuels is a dangerous threat to our economy and national security, President Obama has called upon Congress to deliver comprehensive climate and energy legislation this year. On September 30, 2009, Senator John Kerry, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and Senator Barbara Boxer, Chairman of the Environment and introduced the **Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act of 2009**. The proposal builds upon the House of Representatives' passage of a climate and energy bill in June, and puts Congress firmly on track to complete climate change legislation this year.

The Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act of 2009 will jumpstart our clean energy economy, create new jobs, and help ensure our country is a leader in developing and selling clean energy technology around the world. The bill combines strong global warming pollution reduction goals with investments to create new, good-paying jobs, deploy clean, renewable energy, and save consumers money through energy efficiency. Of particular importance to the National Wildlife Federation, the bill also recognizes the importance of safeguarding our natural resources and people from the impacts of global warming that are already occurring.

It is important to note that the version of the **Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act of 2009** released on September 30th is just a first step, containing many placeholders that leave key policy questions unanswered - including how pollution allowances and auction revenues will be distributed. In the coming weeks, these pieces will be clarified as the Senate moves to passing a more complete bill through the Environment and Public Works Committee at the end of October. The following is a very brief overview of the key components of the bill:

- **Global Warming Pollution Reduction:** The Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act places a cap on carbon and establishes a pollution reduction and investment program with strong targets to achieve economy-wide emission reductions of 20% by 2020 and 83% by 2050. The bill builds on the foundation of the Clean Air Act, without undermining the existing authority of the Environmental Protection Agency to protect public health and the environment from pollution. To gain additional reductions in emissions, the bill also provides incentives for reducing deforestation abroad and sets emissions standards for sources of global warming pollution not covered by the cap. The proposal specifies that pollution allowances will be available through a mix of auction and allocation, but does not clarify amounts for either.

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- **Clean Energy Transition:** The Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act seeks to speed our transition to a clean energy economy through a variety of measures ranging from investments in renewable and energy efficiency technology to provisions aimed at reducing emissions from fossil fuels. While no funding amounts are specified for these programs, the bill outlines opportunities for emission reductions from the advancement of clean energy technology, smart transportation planning, comprehensive building codes, vehicle efficiency, biofuels, and many other areas.
- **Economic Protections:** The Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act contains many measures to ensure that our economy thrives and consumers are protected while we transform our energy system. Polluters have flexibility in meeting their emission limits through banking, borrowing, and trading their emission credits. Additionally, they may “offset” a portion of their emission obligation by funding activities that store carbon in the ground or otherwise reduce emissions, such as agriculture and forestry projects. The bill also creates a “market stability” reserve auction to prevent excessive cost volatility in the carbon market while ensuring the integrity of the pollution cap. In addition, the bill contains several provisions to protect consumers including rebates for low and moderate income Americans, provide allocations to utilities to offset electricity bill increases, and create greater oversight measures to prevent manipulation of the new carbon market.
- **Clean Energy Job Creation:** In addition to the job creation that a strong cap on carbon will drive across the economy, the Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act includes provisions to specifically promote green jobs and provide worker transition assistance into new career fields such as clean energy technologies, green construction, and weatherization. These programs build on the gains made in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act passed this year.
- **Natural Resource Safeguards:** The Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act recognizes that we must safeguard the natural resources we all depend on from the impacts of global warming and outlines long term, science-based plans to manage natural resources in a warming world. To adequately protect the natural places that define, defend, and support America’s diverse communities, and to invest in green jobs to restore and protect nature from global warming, the bill must ensure that sufficient funding is allocated to safeguard our natural resources.
- **Placeholder Titles:** In crafting the Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act, the Environment and Public Works Committee recognized that some elements of a climate and energy policy – including international policy, agriculture, and carbon market oversight issues – fall outside its jurisdiction and require the participation of other key Senate committees. As a result, the bill includes placeholders for additional legislative language that may be developed by members of the Finance, Agriculture, Foreign Relations, and Commerce Committees on a range of key topics.

NWF applauds Senators Kerry and Boxer for providing leadership in moving Congress toward securing a clean energy future. U.S. action to confront the climate crisis is long overdue, and the Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act outlines a pathway forward to reduce global warming pollution, repower our economy through clean energy deployment, and realize a global agreement on climate change. President Obama has signaled strong support for passing comprehensive climate and energy legislation, and as leaders from around the world come together in Copenhagen at the end of 2009 to negotiate an international response to this global crisis, it is critical we take action now and show the international community that America is ready to lead on this most urgent issue.