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HOUSE PASSES FIRST-EVER LIMITS ON CLIMATE CHANGE League Congratulates Pelosi Effort

Washington, DC - Today the House of Representatives passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, known as ACES, setting new limits on the greenhouse gas pollutants that are causing global climate change. Mary G. Wilson, president of the non-partisan League of Women Voters, said the legislation, "is truly historic because it represents the first time the U.S. Congress has acted against global warming." Wilson hailed the "closely fought, bi-partisan vote" that enacted the legislation by 219 to 212. "Speaker Pelosi deserves the credit for pushing this legislation to fruition," Wilson said. Many members of Congress played a prominent and essential role, according to Wilson, including Reps. Henry Waxman and Ed Markey, who designed the bill with other members of the Energy and Commerce Committee. "Speaker Pelosi made the critical decisions and took the necessary steps to make this happen, and we congratulate her for her forward-looking leadership on this critical national and international issue," Wilson said.

The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 sets up the framework to curb global warming and transition America to a clean energy economy. For the first time, the legislation sets a cap on greenhouse gas pollution, aiming to reduce global warming emissions from capped sources by 17 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and by 83 percent by 2050. The bill would establish minimum targets for building codes that will save consumers \$25 billion a year by 2030. Funds will be provided to state and local governments to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

"Make no mistake, this is both a jobs bill and an environmental bill," Wilson said. "The House has recognized that we must move America and the world toward clean energy, green jobs, and a safer environment," she said.

In the days leading up to the final vote, a number of changes were made in the legislation to placate members of Congress who voiced the concerns of special interests. Coal and agricultural interests made major inroads in the legislation, which Wilson condemned. "Too many members fell under the spell of special interest pleading, especially on agriculture and coal," she said, vowing to seek improvements as the legislation goes to the Senate.

"Overall, this is a critically important step," Wilson said. "Global climate change is one of the most serious threats to the environment, health and economy of our nation and our world. Today the House took the critical first step toward addressing these threats," she concluded.

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.