

## New Bill from Senator Cantwell Would Not Adequately Reduce Emissions

But Bill Does Underscore Bipartisan Support for Addressing Climate Change

WASHINGTON (December 11, 2009) — A climate bill introduced yesterday by Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) is proof that there is bipartisan support in Congress for deep emissions reduction goals. However, the bill is too weak to meet its purported goals, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS). The bill, the Carbon Limits and Energy for America's Renewal (CLEAR) Act, was also sponsored by Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine).

The CLEAR Act includes the aspirational goal of cutting heat-trapping emissions 20 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and 83 percent below 2005 levels by 2050. The long-term target is in line with the minimum reductions scientists say are necessary to have a reasonable chance of avoiding the worst effects of climate change. However, the bill provisions would not achieve those goals. In reality, the CLEAR Act would only cap carbon dioxide emissions at 6 percent below 2005 levels by 2020.

Additionally, the bill says that it would provide funds to achieve more emissions reductions, but doesn't say how funds would be spent or how they would achieve emissions reductions. Further, all funds would go through a typical appropriations process and important emissions-reduction programs might not get funded at all. The bill also lacks provisions that would help secure an international climate agreement, such as deep near-term and long-term emissions reductions as well as financial assistance to help protect tropical forests, support clean technology deployment in developing nations, and help vulnerable populations cope with the unavoidable effects of climate change.

According to a UCS analysis, Congress should adopt an integrated, comprehensive [suite of climate and energy policies](#) to curb global warming and accelerate the development of clean energy technology. In addition to a strong emissions cap, the United States also needs efficiency and renewable energy policies that accelerate investments in those areas. Such an approach can set us on a path to adequately reducing our emissions.

The Union of Concerned Scientists is the leading U.S. science-based nonprofit organization working for a healthy environment and a safer world. Founded in 1969, UCS is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and also has offices in Berkeley, Chicago and Washington, D.C.