

## President Obama's Plan to Cut Carbon Pollution

### *Taking Action for Our Kids*

We have a moral obligation to leave our children a planet that's not polluted or damaged, and by taking an all-of-the-above approach to develop homegrown energy and steady, responsible steps to cut carbon pollution, we can protect our kids' health and begin to slow the effects of climate change so we leave a cleaner, more stable environment for future generations. Building on efforts underway in states and communities across the country, the President's plan cuts carbon pollution that causes climate change and threatens public health. Today, we have limits in place for arsenic, mercury and lead, but we let power plants release as much carbon pollution as they want – pollution that is contributing to higher rates of asthma attacks and more frequent and severe floods and heat waves.

Cutting carbon pollution will help keep our air and water clean and protect our kids. The President's plan will also spark innovation across a wide variety of energy technologies, resulting in cleaner forms of American-made energy and cutting our dependence on foreign oil. Combined with the President's other actions to increase the efficiency of our cars and household appliances, the President's plan will help American families cut energy waste, lowering their gas and utility bills. In addition, the plan steps up our global efforts to lead on climate change and invests to strengthen our roads, bridges, and shorelines so we can better protect people's homes, businesses, and way of life from severe weather.

While no single step can reverse the effects of climate change, we have a moral obligation to act on behalf of future generations. Climate change represents one of the major challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but as a nation of innovators, we can and will meet this challenge in a way that advances our economy, our environment, and public health all at the same time. That is why the President's comprehensive plan takes action to:

- **Cuts Carbon Pollution in America.** In 2012, U.S. carbon pollution from the energy sector fell to the lowest level in two decades even as the economy continued to grow. To build on this progress, the Obama Administration is putting in place tough new rules to cut carbon pollution—just like we have for other toxins like mercury and arsenic –so we protect the health of our children and move our economy toward American-made clean energy sources that will create good jobs and lower home energy bills. For example, the plan:
  - Directs EPA to work closely with states, industry and other stakeholder to establish carbon pollution standards for both new and existing power plants;
  - Makes up to \$8 billion in loan guarantee authority available for a wide array of advanced fossil energy and efficiency projects to support investments in innovative technologies;
  - Directs DOI to permit enough renewables project—like wind and solar – on public lands by 2020 to power more than 6 million homes; designates the first-ever hydropower project for priority permitting; and sets a new goal to install 100 megawatts of renewables on federally assisted housing by 2020; while maintaining the commitment to deploy renewables on military installations;
  - Expands the President's Better Building Challenge, focusing on helping commercial, industrial, and multi-family buildings cut waste and become at least 20 percent more energy efficient by 2020;
  - Sets a goal to reduce carbon pollution by at least 3 billion metric tons cumulatively by 2030 – more than half of the annual carbon pollution from the U.S. energy sector – through efficiency standards set over the course of the Administration for appliances and federal buildings;

- Commits to partnering with industry and stakeholders to develop fuel economy standards for heavy-duty vehicles to save families money at the pump and further reduce reliance on foreign oil and fuel consumption post-2018; and
- Leverages new opportunities to reduce pollution of highly-potent greenhouse gases known as hydrofluorocarbons; directs agencies to develop a comprehensive methane strategy; and commits to protect our forests and critical landscapes.

➤ **Prepares the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change.** Even as we take new steps to cut carbon pollution, we must also prepare for the impacts of a changing climate that are already being felt across the country. Building on progress over the last four years, the plan:

- Directs agencies to support local climate-resilient investment by removing barriers or counterproductive policies and modernizing programs; and establishes a short-term task force of state, local, and tribal officials to advise on key actions the Federal government can take to help strengthen communities on the ground;
- Pilots innovative strategies in the Hurricane Sandy-affected region to strengthen communities against future extreme weather and other climate impacts; and building on a new, consistent flood risk reduction standard established for the Sandy-affected region, agencies will update flood-risk reduction standards for all federally funded projects;
- Launches an effort to create sustainable and resilient hospitals in the face of climate change through a public-private partnership with the healthcare industry;
- Maintains agricultural productivity by delivering tailored, science-based knowledge to farmers, ranchers, and landowners; and helps communities prepare for drought and wildfire by launching a National Drought Resilience Partnership and by expanding and prioritizing forest- and rangeland-restoration efforts to make areas less vulnerable to catastrophic fire; and
- Provides climate preparedness tools and information needed by state, local, and private-sector leaders through a centralized “toolkit” and a new Climate Data Initiative.

➤ **Lead International Efforts to Address Global Climate Change.** Just as no country is immune from the impacts of climate change, no country can meet this challenge alone. That is why it is imperative for the United States to couple action at home with leadership internationally. America must help forge a truly global solution to this global challenge by galvanizing international action to significantly reduce emissions, prepare for climate impacts, and drive progress through the international negotiations. For example, the plan:

- Commits to expand major new and existing international initiatives, including bilateral initiatives with China, India, and other major emitting countries;
- Leads global sector public financing towards cleaner energy by calling for the end of U.S. government support for public financing of new coal-fired powers plants overseas, except for the most efficient coal technology available in the world's poorest countries, or facilities deploying carbon capture and sequestration technologies; and
- Strengthens global resilience to climate change by expanding government and local community planning and response capacities.