



Senator Feinstein Praises California's Landmark Program to Cut Greenhouse Gas Emissions

August 31, 2006

San Francisco – California's political leadership announced a landmark agreement last night to implement a mandatory program to aggressively cut manmade carbon dioxide emissions across the State. The bill, sponsored by California's Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez and Assemblywoman Fran Pavley, requires the California Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop and implement regulations to enforce a cap which would reduce the state's global warming emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, about 20-25% below current levels.

The following is a statement by U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), praising the California bill.

"I am extremely proud that California is now the most aggressive State in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming. A State as large as California setting this kind of a cap – which cuts emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 – will reverberate around the nation.

And already, other states are joining together to limit emissions. The governors of seven northeastern states are instituting a cap-and trade system known as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

California's landmark climate change law signals a giant step forward. But in my view it's imperative that we move nationally, and yes – even internationally – to curb greenhouse gases.

Many of the world's most preeminent scientists – including those at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, other University of California campuses, and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory – all predict serious, and even catastrophic, consequences for our planet unless we make major changes in our consumption of energy and strongly move away from energy sources that produce the gases that cause global warming.

They say that to stabilize the planet's climate by the end of the century, we need a 70 percent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels by 2050.

Our goal should be to stabilize carbon dioxide at 450 parts per million by 2050. This could restrict further warming to 1 to 2 degrees Fahrenheit.

So I am working on a bill that would create a national framework within which greenhouse gas emissions from coal plants, utilities, the transportation sector and other major carbon dioxide producers will be reduced.

Details are still being worked out, but working together with business leaders, I believe we can reduce our emissions sufficiently to stabilize the Earth's climate, to minimize warming, and slow global temperature increases to 1-2 degrees Fahrenheit by the middle of the century to avoid catastrophic climate change.

It is my goal to introduce this bill, which provides a framework to achieve a mandatory cap level on the first day of the next session. This must be our most urgent environmental priority."

###