

# The Time Is Now for Global Warming Action

**The news we hear about global warming** these days is usually grim: rising temperatures, melting ice caps, and burning forests. But this year, California changed the story line by passing the Global Warming Solutions Act—the most ambitious law to limit statewide global warming pollution in the nation.

How did California get on a clean energy path? In no small part, it was thanks to NRDC. We had the muscle to push forward this law, as the centerpiece of a package of global warming legislation, on many fronts—in the business community, in the media, in the public health arena, in the state legislature, and in the court of public opinion. Bringing all of our expertise to bear, we helped move California into the international forefront of global warming solutions.

It all started with our decision to showcase both the public health and economic benefits of curbing global warming. Naysayers often claim that limits on carbon dioxide will jeopardize businesses and spark an energy crisis. NRDC knows this is false, and we set out to prove it to California legislators and the public.

First, together with our partners, our experts worked with Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez and Assemblywoman Fran Pavley to craft a law that would employ a full range of tools

including market forces in addition to specific programs to give businesses the incentives they need to reduce emissions. We laid out timetables, design criteria, and systems for monitoring and verifying emissions that would slash global warming pollution by 25 percent below forecasted levels by 2020 without hurting businesses' bottom line.

Next, NRDC's legislative advocates and our partners enlisted the best messengers, including California business leaders, mayors, water districts and other fresh voices, to spread the word about the bill's economic benefits. We joined with members of Environmental Entrepreneurs—an NRDC partner group of influential professionals from high-tech, venture capital, manufacturing, and other businesses—to meet with legislators and the press to explain that a cap on global warming emissions would create a clean energy boom, and give California a competitive advantage by acting first to curb global warming.



#### The energy experts:

Sustainability specialist Shari Walker, clean-energy champion Sheryl Carter, and California scientist Devra Wang

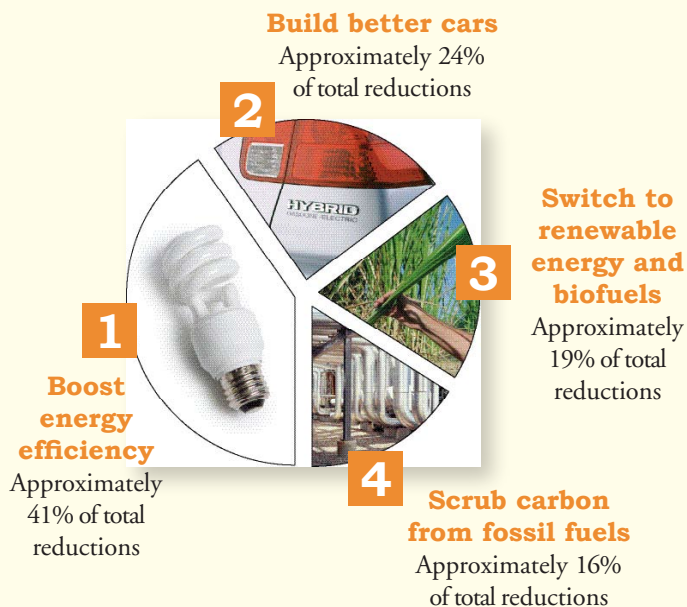


#### Media maven

Craig Noble and legislative ace Annie Notthoff

## NRDC's Solutions for Cutting U.S. Global Warming Pollution by More Than Half

**Congress began to get serious** about tackling global warming this year, introducing a series of new bills aimed at curbing dangerous emissions. When NRDC recommended a long-term declining cap on global warming pollution, legislators responded with the Waxman, Jeffords-Boxer, and Kerry-Snowe bills, which will help create a clear path for long-term energy investments. NRDC was a party in the first global warming case to reach the Supreme Court, leading a coalition of states, cities, and other environmental groups. The case, *Massachusetts v. EPA*, challenges the Bush administration's claim that the Clean Air Act does not cover the heat-trapping pollutants that cause global warming. Regardless of the outcome, the case is helping build public support for the new Congress to act.



Our business allies made it clear that California didn't have to choose between the environment and the economy, but could achieve the targeted reductions while at the same time increasing gross state product and creating tens of thousands of new jobs.

As business support grew for the bill, NRDC bolstered public opinion with a steady drumbeat of press and community outreach. We drew media attention to scientific studies that outlined how global warming was already affecting California, from the melting Sierra snow pack to the intensifying wildfires. We worked with the American Lung Association to talk with community leaders about the serious health problems caused by worsening air quality. We worked with community groups to ensure that any market mechanisms implemented under the law would complement the state's efforts to reduce air pollution, particularly in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. And we mobilized NRDC members

and online activists to send thousands of messages to state legislators and the governor in support of the bill.

In the end, it was NRDC's reputation as honest brokers of science and the law that helped push the bill past the tipping point. California's legislators trusted our explanations of how the state could meet pollution reduction targets. Utilities, such as PG&E and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, worked constructively to make the bill a success, thanks to our decades of experience at implementing the solutions to global warming. Sticking to the facts, keeping at it day and night, and staying out of partisan fights, we built consensus and got the law passed.

But we haven't stopped our efforts there. The success in California is just part of NRDC's state-by-state global warming strategy. We will now press other states and Congress to follow California's example, and we will continue this march until rigorous global warming solutions are in place at the national level.



### Board members

Bob Epstein and Bob Fisher helped enlist the best messengers for the bill: California's business leaders.

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