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Lieberman and Warner Introduce Bipartisan Climate Legislation

Bill would substantially cut US greenhouse-gas emissions

Washington D.C. -- Senators Joseph I. Lieberman (ID-CT) and John W. Warner (R-VA), chairman and ranking Member of the Senate Subcommittee on Private Sector and Consumer Solutions to Global Warming and Wildlife Protection today introduced a bill that would achieve substantial, long-term cuts in U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions.

On its own, the America's Climate Security Act (ACSA) is projected to reduce total U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions by as much as 19% below the 2005 level (4% below the 1990 level) in 2020 and by as much as 63% below the 2005 level in 2050. Lieberman and Warner presented their new bill as the core of a new federal program that Congress should pass to avert catastrophic global climate change while enhancing America's energy security.

"With all the irrefutable evidence we now have corroborating that climate change is real, dangerous, and proceeding faster than many scientists predicted, this is the year for Congress to move this critical legislation," said Lieberman. "If we fail to start substantially reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the next couple of years, we risk bequeathing a diminished world to our grandchildren. Insect-borne diseases such as malaria will spike as tropical ecosystems expand; hotter air will exacerbate the pollution that sends children to the hospital with asthma attacks; food insecurity from shifting agricultural zones will spark border wars; and storms and coastal flooding from sea-level rise will cause mortality and dislocation."

"In my 28 years in the Senate, I have focused above all on issues of national security, and I see the problem of global climate change as fitting squarely within that focus," said Warner.

"Today we introduced a balanced bill. Senator Lieberman and I found a good, sound, starting point that sends a significant signal that the U.S. is serious about taking a leadership role in reducing its greenhouse gas emissions."

Joining Lieberman and Warner in co-sponsoring ACSA are Senators Norm Coleman (R-MN), Tom Harkin (D-IA), Elizabeth Dole (R-NC), Benjamin Cardin (D-MD), Susan Collins (R-ME) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

"It is imperative that our nation acts now to address the concerns over growing greenhouse gas emissions, while carefully addressing the effects it could have on working families and our economy," said Coleman. "The Lieberman-Warner America's Climate Security Act meets this need by taking a responsible approach to greenhouse gas reduction that will not undermine our economy, which is why I am pleased to be an original co-sponsor. Climate change is not a problem we can leave to our children to solve. I am confident this bill will not only protect our environment, but protect our children."

"The science is clear and compelling -- we must act to control and reduce greenhouse gas emissions," said Senator Harkin. "This bill is an excellent starting point for formulating a national climate change strategy. I am especially pleased that it recognizes the critical role that the agricultural sector can play in that strategy through reductions in farm emissions and sequestration of carbon in soils."

"The solution to this serious problem is not inaction," said Senator Elizabeth Dole. "We must ensure clean air for future generations, and this is a responsible, market-driven approach that strengthens our economy, competitiveness and security."

"Climate change is one of the most daunting challenges we face and we must develop reasonable solutions to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. That is why I am pleased to be an original co-sponsor of the Lieberman-Warner America's Climate Security Act. This bipartisan bill presents a practical, economically-sound approach to reducing America's greenhouse gas emissions 70 percent over 2005 levels by 2050," said Senator Susan Collins.

In July 2007, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that if the U.S. achieves emissions reductions of the magnitude mandated by ACSA, then - making conservative assumptions about the pace of emissions reductions in the rest of the world - the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will remain below 500 parts per million (ppm) at the end of this century. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, keeping the concentration below 500 ppm will avoid a high risk of global warming that would cause severe impacts.

America's Climate Security Act controls compliance costs by allowing companies to trade,

save, and borrow emission allowances, and by allowing them to generate credits when they induce non-covered businesses, farms, and others to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions or capture and store greenhouse gases.

The Act invests set-aside emissions credits and money raised by the auction of such allowances in advancing several important public policies, including, but not limited to:

- Deploying advanced technologies and practices for reducing emissions;
- Protecting low- and middle-income Americans from higher energy costs;
- Keeping good jobs in the United States; and
- Mitigating the negative impacts of any unavoidable global warming on low- and middle-income Americans and wildlife.

Several key environmental groups, , companies, and other organizations, including the National Wildlife Federation, Environmental Defense and the National Resources Defense Council, have expressed support for ACSA.

Larry Schweiger, President and CEO, National Wildlife Federation:

"This is a bipartisan breakthrough on global warming that takes us a giant step closer to a historic vote in the United States Senate. I commend Senator Lieberman and Senator Warner for drafting a strong bill to protect wildlife from global warming."

John Rowe, Chairman and CEO, Exelon Corporation:

"As an early and vocal advocate for climate change legislation, Exelon applauds the bipartisan leadership of Senators Lieberman and Warner to introduce a bill that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions to address global warming as soon as possible. The legislation represents another important step towards developing the bipartisan consensus necessary to enact legislation this Congress. We are especially pleased that the bill recognizes the need to protect electricity consumers by allocating part of the allowances to local utilities for the benefit of their customers."

Steve Cochran, National Climate Campaign Director, Environmental Defense:

"Lieberman and Warner have paved the way for a historic committee vote on a bill that promises to make great strides toward climate security and economic growth. Thanks to their thoughtful approach we're moving beyond talk and quickly toward action."

Steven Kline, Vice President for Corporate Environmental and Federal Affairs, PGE Corp:

"We believe America's Climate Security Act provides a solid starting point for constructively advancing a comprehensive, national response to and policy on climate change. Senators Lieberman and Warner have developed a thoughtful proposal that recognizes the urgent need for action by designing a program to achieve significant emission reductions from all sectors of the economy. The bill includes provisions that prioritize energy efficiency and technology development and deployment, as well as innovative ideas to protect electricity consumers, manage overall program costs, and provide states with the resources to help address the unique needs of their communities and citizens as we transition to a low-carbon economy and adapt to a changing environment. America's Climate Security Act takes significant steps toward recognizing that a national program must balance the economic, technology, and environmental challenges of combating climate change."

Frances Beinecke, President, Natural Resources Defense Council:

"The introduction and planned markup of America's Climate Security Act by Senators Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) and John Warner (R-Va.) represents an important step forward in the overdue process to enact comprehensive, mandatory global warming legislation. Committee consideration of this legislation will help move us toward the substantial reductions in global warming pollution we need to protect our climate. The bill also recognizes the need to direct proceeds from the pollution allowance market to important policy objectives, including promoting clean energy solutions, protecting the poor and other consumers, ensuring a just transition for workers in affected industries, and preventing impacts abroad that lead to conflicts and threats to security."

The Members of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies:

"[O]ur organizations, representing millions of American sportsmen and sportswomen, thank you again for working with us to help address the challenge of climate change by both reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and providing important new resources to assist fish and wildlife survive in the face of this unprecedented challenge."

[Click here](#) for a photo of Senators Lieberman and Warner reviewing the America's Climate Security Act.