



House Green Economy Bill Falls Short

Polluting special interests have weakened bill; it now falls far short of vision for clean energy future Obama articulated during campaign

A bill intended to spur the United States' transition to a clean energy economy and reduce global warming pollution is advancing in Congress. The bill (H.R. 2454), sponsored by Representatives Henry Waxman and Ed Markey, passed the House of Representatives June 26 by a 219 to 212 margin.

Unfortunately, special interest lobbyists paid by Big Oil, Dirty Coal and other polluters—as well as Wall Street traders—managed to substantially weaken the bill. (The fact that polluting corporations like Shell Oil and Duke Energy, which is trying to build new coal-fired power plants, back the bill demonstrates its impotence.) Here's why Friends of the Earth Action opposes the bill:

- **Doesn't solve the climate crisis.** The bill does not reduce pollution rapidly enough to avoid the many dangerous impacts that will result from continued degradation of our atmosphere. The U.S. must reduce domestic emissions of heat-trapping gasses at least 40 percent by 2020 to account for our fair share of the global emissions reductions that are required to avoid catastrophic climate change impacts. But due to weak targets, offsets, and other loopholes, this bill is unlikely to lead to actual U.S. emissions reductions for a decade. That means the bill ultimately fails to do what's needed to avoid climate change impacts such as severe droughts, storms and floods, which will inflict pain and suffering on human communities, harm the economy, and undermine global security.
- **Ties Obama EPA's hands.** The bill removes heat-trapping gases from key Clean Air Act protections, limiting the Obama administration's ability to tackle climate change on its own.
- **A missed opportunity to create jobs and strengthen the economy.** The bill fails to make the U.S. a global clean energy leader. Indeed, analysts have found its Renewable Electricity Standard creates no more clean energy in the U.S. than would be created anyway over the next two decades. This failure to dramatically ramp up clean energy means fewer jobs in manufacturing and other green industries—that while the rest of the world creates millions of green jobs, the U.S. will be left behind.
- **Puts Wall Street in charge.** The bill will create giant, volatile carbon markets dominated by the same Wall Street banks that brought us the current financial crisis. Congress has yet to reform and improve regulation of the financial sector, but Wall Street's 130 climate lobbyists have already put loopholes into this bill that would undermine the integrity of the carbon markets it creates.
- **"Offset" loopholes.** The bill's massive "offset" pollution loopholes mean the U.S. is unlikely to meet even the limited pollution reduction targets included in the bill, while making unfair demands on other countries to reduce their emissions so we don't have to. These loopholes also threaten carbon market stability and will retard domestic job creation.
- **Polluter payouts make the bill a lobbyist's dream come true.** The bill gives pollution permits worth hundreds of billions away for free to polluting industries, including Big Oil and Dirty Coal.
- **Undermines U.S. global leadership.** The bill prevents the U.S. from being a global leader. It undercuts our ability to take a constructive seat at the table in talks aimed at producing an international climate treaty by under-funding critical investments that can spread clean energy around the world and assist vulnerable communities as they prepare for climate change impacts.

Join our fight for clean energy and a healthy climate.

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