

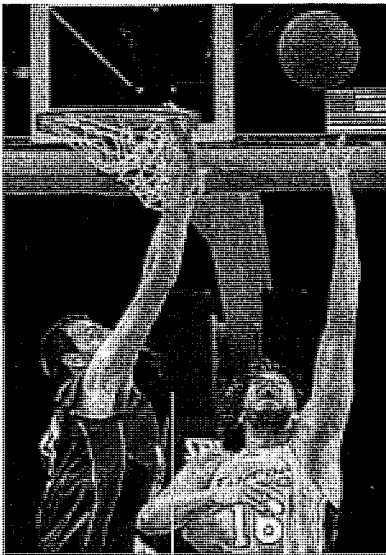
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WSJ.com

APRIL 1, 2009, 9:53 AM ET

Clean Dreams: California Moves Closer to 33% Renewables Target

The House draft bill on energy and climate calls for one-quarter of electricity in the U.S. to come from renewable sources by 2025. Is that feasible? Look at California.



Might...just...make it (AP)

California already has the nation's most ambitious renewable-energy targets—20% in 2010 and now 33% in 2020. The California senate yesterday approved a bill making that more ambitious target official. While California utilities won't quite meet the 2010 target, things are looking better for the more ambitious goal.

After sounding a cautionary note last fall, the California Public Utilities Commission is getting more optimistic about the prospects of the state providing 33% of its electricity from clean energy. Last year, California installed four times more renewable energy under the renewable program than in any prior year, marking a tipping point of sorts. In its latest progress report, the California regulator says:

Clearly, 2008 was a turning point for the [Renewable Portfolio Standard] program and contracted projects are beginning to deliver in large numbers. This may represent the end of the start-up phase of the RPS program, as contracts signed in the earlier years of the program are now built and the renewable market begins to mature.

On paper at least, there are enough clean-energy projects in the pipeline to meet the 33% target well ahead of schedule—in 2013, CPUC says.

That doesn't mean there aren't still plenty of hurdles. Geothermal and wind power account for more than half the state's clean energy today, yet new renewable-energy projects in the state are shunning geothermal and wind in favor of more-expensive solar power. The transmission question still looms large—utilities will have a hard time overcoming environmental opposition to new transmission lines and may struggle to build them quickly enough to meet the state's new targets, CPUC notes.

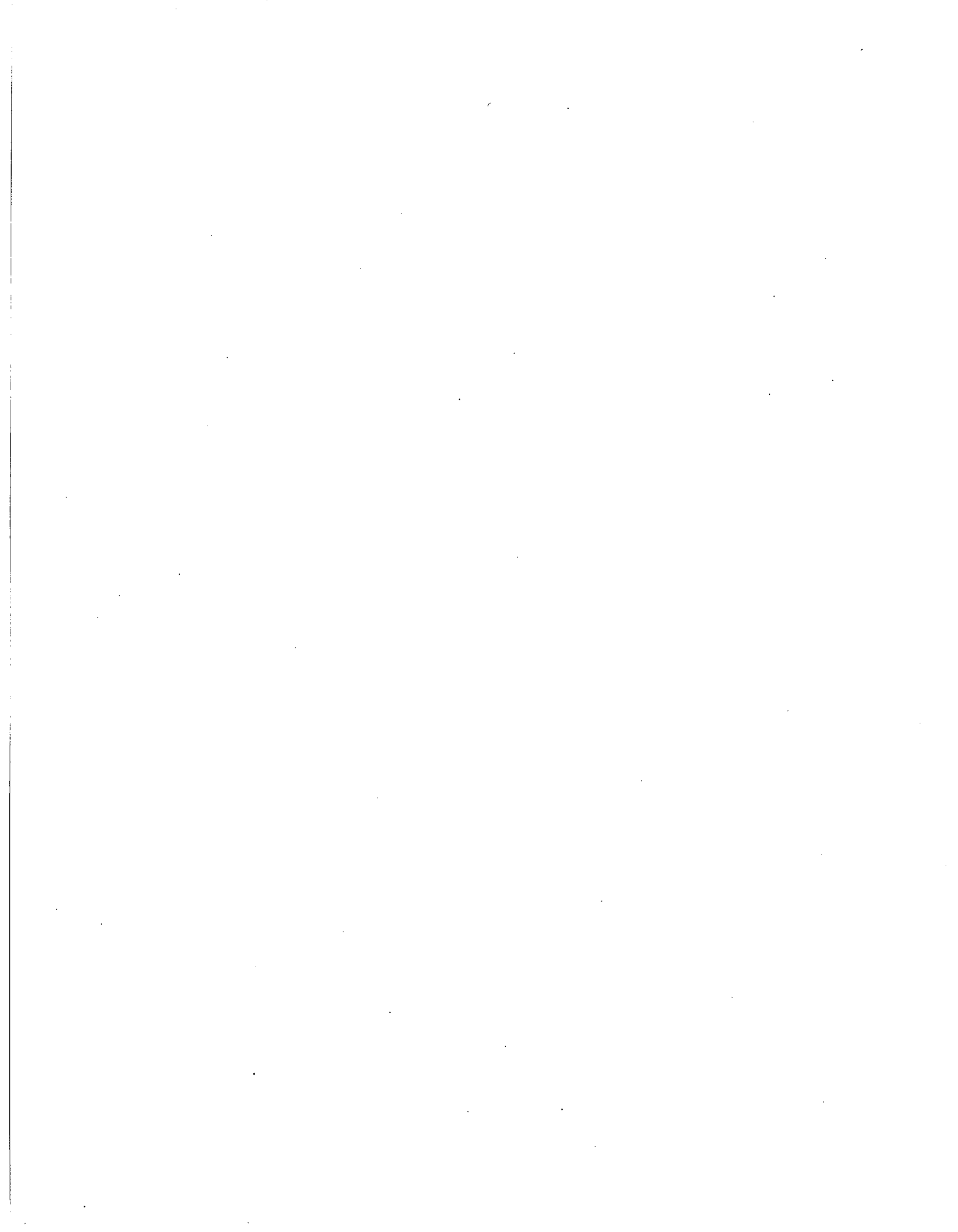
But there might be a way around that: Think small. One of the ways California could meet its new targets is by building tiny, 20-megawatt solar installations near existing power substations and power lines.

That would solve the transmission gridlock and potentially provide lots of power. CPUC estimates that so-called distributed solar could provide the vast majority of the new clean-electricity capacity the state needs to meet the 33% target.

Of course, small-scale solar power is more expensive than wind power or traditional generation like natural gas. California might be able to meet its clean-energy goals, but will have to be ready to pay for it.

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The Washington Post

House Climate Bill Aims to Please Environmental and Business Interests

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By Juliet Eilperin
Washington Post Staff Writer
Wednesday, April 1, 2009; A04

House Democrats introduced an ambitious climate bill yesterday aimed at pleasing both environmental and business interests, even as Senate leaders acknowledged that the party faces serious challenges in trying to pass a carbon limit in the near future.

The 648-page "discussion draft," crafted by House Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry A. Waxman (Calif.) and Rep. Edward J. Markey (Mass.), chairman of the subcommittee on energy and the environment, would create the first federal requirements to boost energy efficiency and ensure that a quarter of the nation's electricity comes from renewable sources. It also would cut the nation's greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent from 2005 levels by 2020, and by 80 percent by mid-century.

The measure also would provide incentives for industries that will be hit the hardest by a limit on emissions, including a \$10 billion fund to promote carbon capture and storage technology and a provision that would reward carbon-intensive manufacturers that face global competition if they operate more efficiently than their overseas counterparts.

"I think this bill is a game-changer that takes the best of industry's and environmentalists' ideas," Markey said in an interview. "Because of that, there is a newfound sense of possibility."

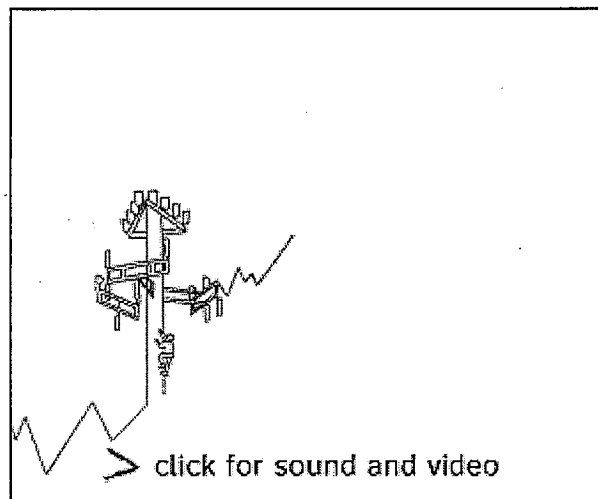
The draft, however, represents the beginning of climate negotiations on the Hill, not the end: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) called it "a strong starting point." Rep. Mike Doyle (D-Pa.), a key swing vote on Markey's subcommittee, said that he welcomed some of the concessions to carbon-dependent regions such as his own district but that he has not decided whether to back the bill.

"It's come a long way. We've got a long way to go," Doyle said in an interview. "The devil's always in the details."

Moreover, many Democrats emphasized that they face a greater challenge in the Senate. "We don't have 60 votes," said Sen. Richard J. Durbin (Ill.), the majority whip in charge of counting votes.

In the current environment, Durbin said, there is little hope of passing a climate bill anytime soon, and legislative momentum among Democrats has shifted toward moving health-care reform legislation before a climate plan. "We still have a long way to go [on climate legislation], but we hope we can get to it," said Durbin, who supports the bill.

Republican leaders have made it clear that they will attack Democrats for seeking a cap-and-trade



system for greenhouse gases. Yesterday, House Minority Leader John A. Boehner (Ohio) issued a statement suggesting that the bill would force American manufacturers to move overseas, saying, "The Democrats' plan to raise energy taxes in the midst of a serious recession is the wrong thing to do and the worst possible time to do it."

Many officials from industries that stand to be most affected by greenhouse gas limits, by contrast, offered cautious praise for the Democratic draft. The measure is deliberately silent on whether the government will auction off 100 percent of its pollution allowances right away or will distribute some for free, a question that James E. Rogers, chief executive of Duke Energy Co., said "will make or break this bill."

Deciding how to distribute pollution allowances as well as the money raised through such an auction is "going to be key to get lots of ducks to line up in a row," said David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's climate center.

Markey predicted leaders would resolve the matter by the time his panel began voting on the legislation in about a month.

Several utility representatives, however, questioned whether they could meet the bill's requirement to have 25 percent of their electricity derived from renewable energy by 2025 while also achieving a 15 percent electricity savings and a 10 percent natural gas savings by 2020.

Tom Kuhn, who represents about 70 percent of the U.S. electricity sector as president of the Edison Electric Institute, said his members worry that the two provisions are "overly ambitious and will simply raise the cost of generating electricity without producing any additional emissions reductions."

Staff writer Paul Kane contributed to this report.

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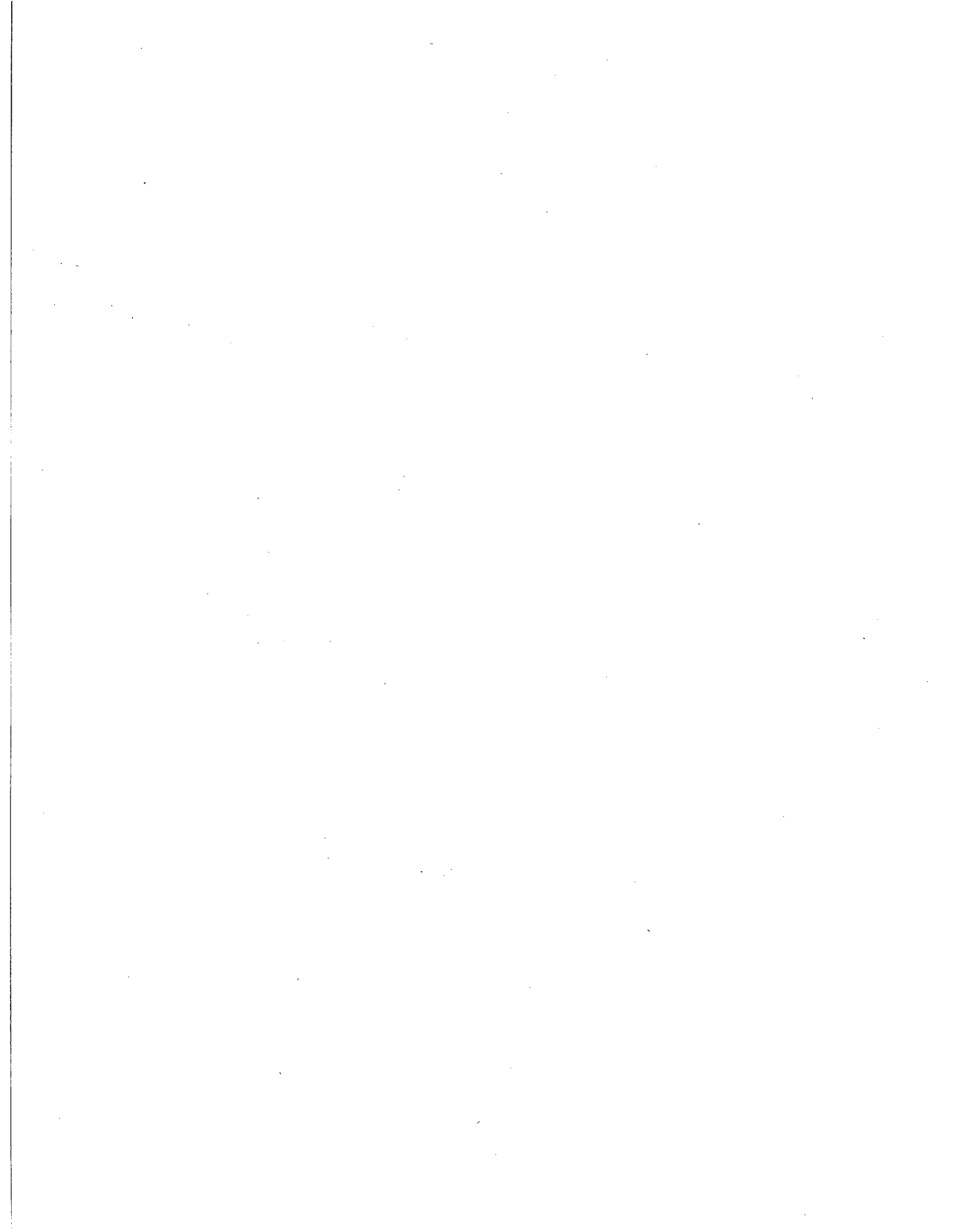
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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Obama's First 100 Days: Critical times

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WSJ.com

APRIL 1, 2009

House Emissions Bill Postpones Decisions on Cost

By IAN TALLEY and STEPHEN POWER

WASHINGTON -- The debate in Washington over climate change shifted into higher gear Tuesday as powerful California Democrat Henry Waxman introduced a bill to cut U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions, but without specifying how the costs would be levied on different sectors of the economy.

The more-than-600-page document published by Mr. Waxman, chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and Rep. Edward Markey (D., Mass.) represents the opening bid by the party's liberal leaders in the House in what promises to be a long struggle with more moderate Senate Democrats and Republicans over how to curb emissions, and whether to do it in the middle of a recession.

The Waxman-Markey proposal represents another big piece in a complex energy strategy that Mr. Obama and his Democratic allies are pushing through legislation, budget priorities and policies being set by regulatory agencies.

Mr. Obama wants to put a price on emissions of carbon dioxide, a major contributor to climate change, in part to spur development in the U.S. of new power-generation technology, more efficient cars and buildings that consume less energy. Mr. Obama has argued this serves two goals: curbing climate change, and creating new "green" jobs. Mr. Obama has directed billions of dollars in new federal spending to renovate the electric grid, the better to carry power generated by windmills. He has called for more federal support for research into energy-saving technology, and has directed the Environmental Protection Agency to consider letting states regulate automobile emissions of gases that contribute to global warming.

But the key to all of Mr. Obama's initiatives is raising the cost of burning fossil fuels, which provide the majority of the U.S. economy's electric and transportation energy -- a politically challenging endeavor even in good economic times.

Those risks were underscored by Republican attacks Tuesday on the Waxman-Markey bill. The proposal would "raise taxes on every American who drives a car, flips on a light switch, or buys a product manufactured in the United States," House Minority Leader John Boehner of Ohio said in a statement.

The Waxman-Markey bill calls for cutting U.S. emissions 20% below 2005 levels by 2020, compared with the roughly 14% reduction that Mr. Obama has called for in that time frame. It would also mandate tougher efficiency standards for buildings and appliances, and require that by 2025, the U.S. derive at least 25% of its electricity from renewable sources.

But the measure -- which its authors described as a "discussion draft" -- avoids specifying how the costs of fighting

climate change will be distributed across the economy. For example, the measure would establish a so-called cap-and-trade system, which would limit the overall amount of carbon dioxide companies are allowed to emit and would let companies buy permits giving them the right to pollute if they can't cut their emissions by the required amount. But the proposal doesn't spell out the percentage of those permits that would be given away for free, versus being sold at auctions by the government.

Lobbyists for industries that depend heavily on cheap fossil-fuel power, such as cement, steel and coal-fired electric plants, say any U.S. regulation of greenhouse-gas emissions should include a giveaway of some emissions allowances, to give the companies time to work on new technology.

Mr. Obama's aides say that would lead to windfall profits for some companies. His administration has called for auctioning off 100% of the emission allowances and using the bulk of the revenue -- roughly \$645 billion between 2012, when the system kicks in, and 2019 -- to fund tax credits for the middle class.

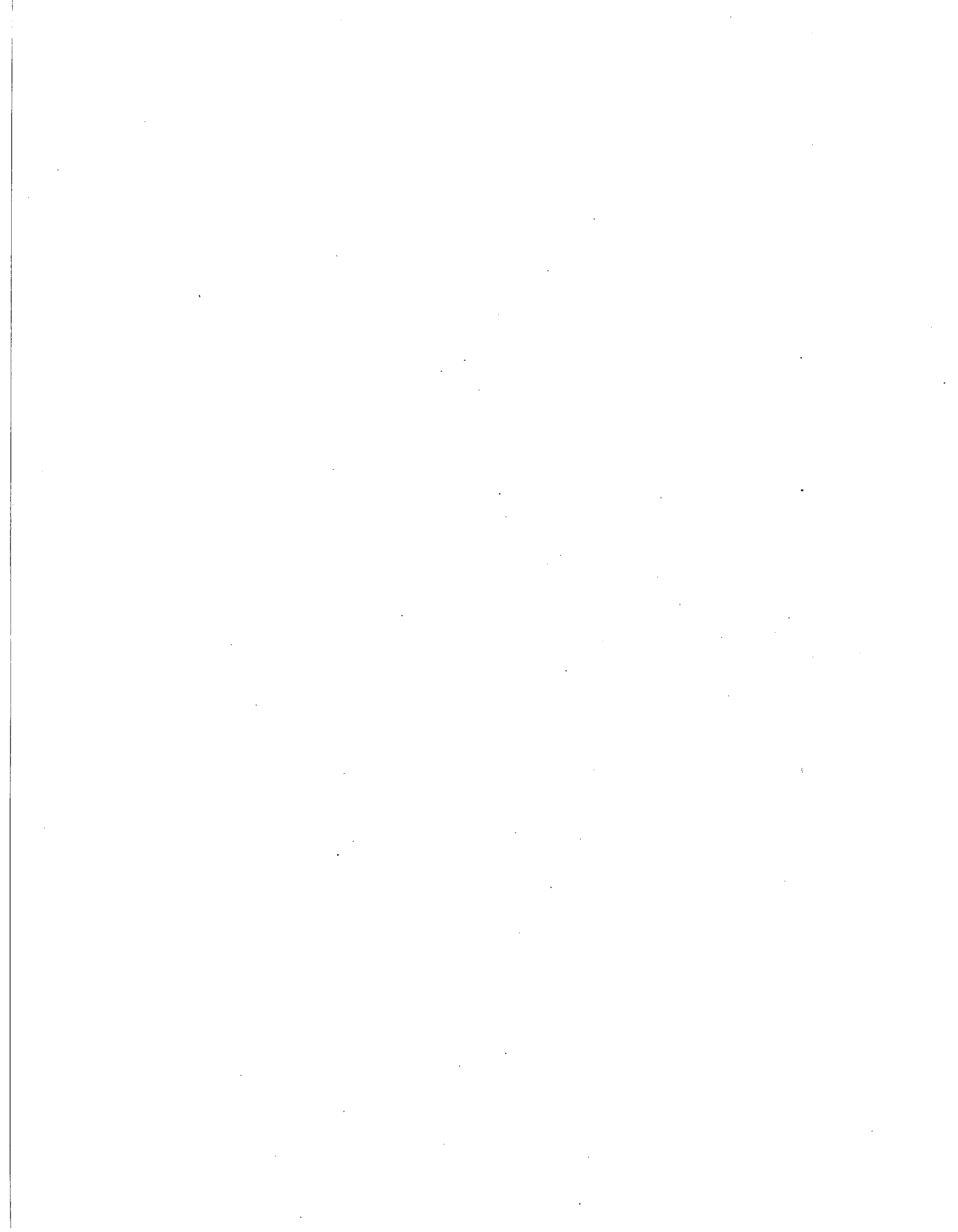
The Waxman-Markey proposal calls for an unspecified amount of emissions permits to be given away for free to certain trade-sensitive U.S. industries, to ease their costs of compliance.

Write to Ian Talley at ian.talley@dowjones.com and Stephen Power at stephen.power@wsj.com

Printed in The Wall Street Journal, page A4

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The New York Times

DOT EARTH

Nine Billion People. One Planet.

APRIL 3, 2009, 2:15 PM

Study: Cool Spells Normal in Warming World

By ANDREW C. REVKIN

Graphs provided by the authors, published by the AGU A climate simulation in a world facing “business as usual” increases in greenhouse gases still shows lots of periods with cool fluctuations.

A valuable short paper that has been accepted for publication in Geophysical Research Letters (subscription required) makes a strong case against presenting any argument about human-driven global warming that’s based on short-term trends (a decade or so). I’ve noted here before that climate campaigners who seek to use real-time events to engage the public can only retain credibility if they account for natural variability in framing their case and explain that the odds of such events are shifting. (Realclimate explored natural variability and warming last year, too.)

The same requirement applies to the community of climate skeptics/contrarians/deniers/realists (depending on who’s doing the labeling) who have made a mantra out of the “global cooling” since the 1998 peak in global temperature.

Measured changes in global temperature show ups and downs, with some periods of a decade or more defying the long-term trend.

The paper shows, both in recent records and projections using computer simulations, how utterly normal it is to have decade-long vagaries in temperature, up and down, on the way to a warmer world. The paper is titled simply, “Is the climate warming or cooling?” It is written by David R. Easterling of the National Climatic Data Center and Michael F. Wehner of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

The bottom line? “We show that the climate over the 21st century can and likely will produce periods of a decade or two where the globally averaged surface air temperature shows no trend or even slight cooling in the presence of longer-term warming,” the paper says, adding that, “It is easy to ‘cherry pick’ a period to reinforce a point of view.”

I asked Dr. Easterling why they pursued this effort, which somewhat replicates findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, but perhaps with a more pointed goal. Here’s his reply:

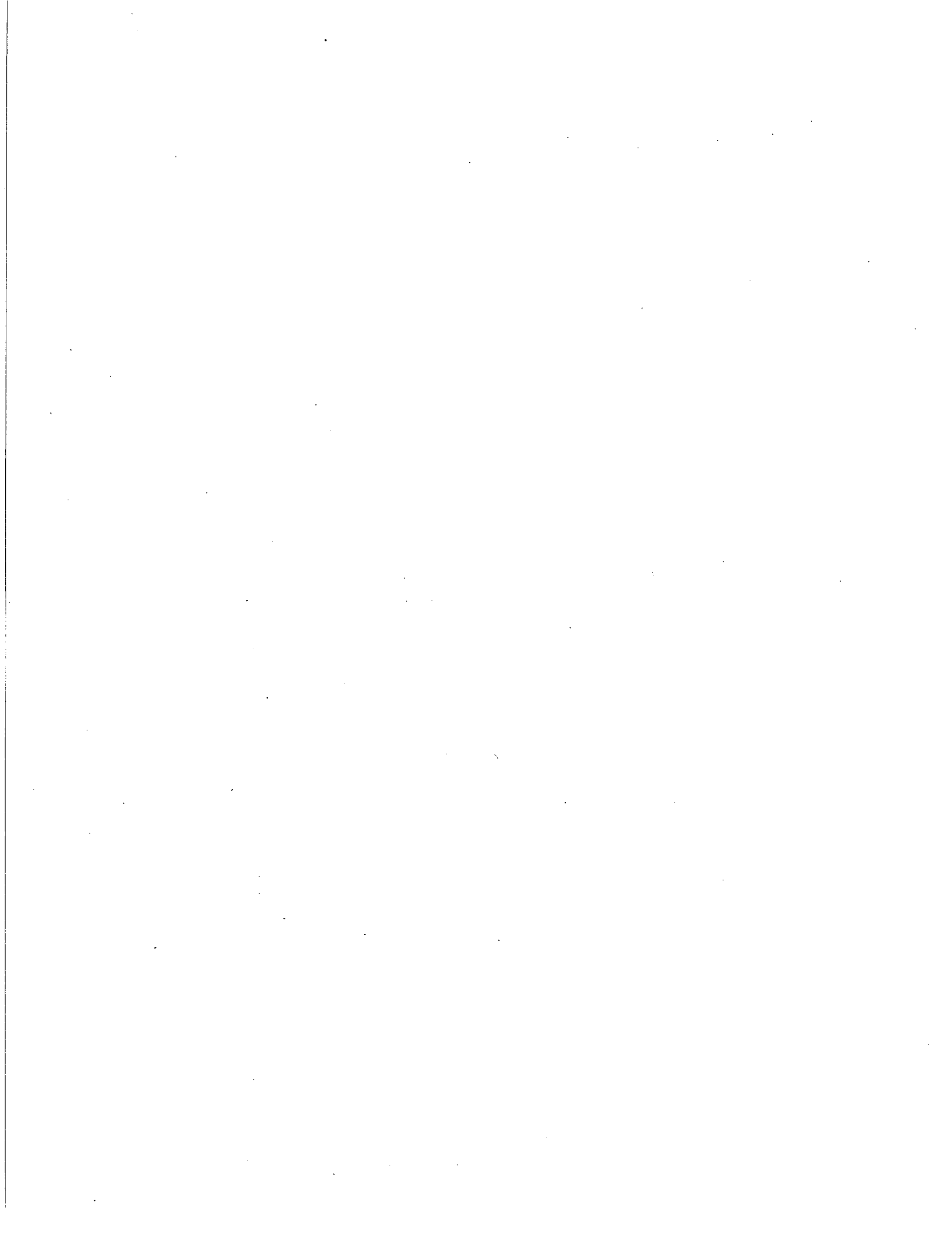
To show, in a peer-reviewed scientifically defensible way that there is no reason to expect the climate to warm in a monotonic type fashion, that there is natural variability along with anthropogenic forced warming and we shouldn’t expect each year to be warmer than the next or even a run of 10 years always to show warming. That we can get a 10- or even 15-year period with no real change in globally averaged temperature even though in the end we have strong global warming.

There was another useful effort by climate scientists and communication specialists this week, a letter to the journal Science, “Creating a Common Climate Language,” urging international organizations to standardize basic terms in assessing climate science to gauge policy responses. (You can download the letter at Michael Mann’s Web page.)

The more work that the science community does along these lines, the better. There is a dizzying range of official definitions of the term “climate change” itself, for starters. Some assessments track only concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere; others consolidate the influence of all greenhouse gases into a “carbon dioxide equivalent” measurement. There’s no common number for the globe’s “pre-industrial” average temperature, etc. When entering any debate, a first step clearly is to settle on definitions.

I’ll be doing more pieces on the climate basics soon, including a look at arguments that ocean cycles like the Pacific Decadal Oscillation are the dominant driver of recent climate change. I’ll also be writing more on why sea levels do not rise uniformly (and may be falling in a few places) even as there is high confidence in rising seas in a warming world.

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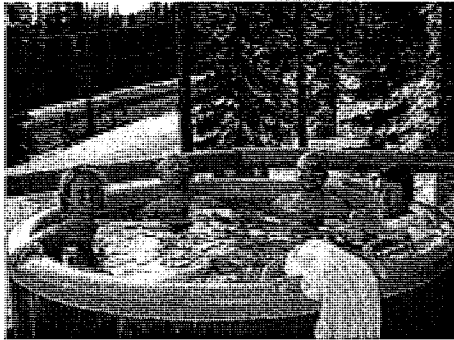
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WSJ.com

APRIL 3, 2009, 1:08 PM ET

In Hot Water: Energy and Climate Bill is Really, Really Comprehensive

For better or worse, the massive draft bill released by the House of Representatives this week is set to be the template for Congressional action this year on energy and the climate, now that the Senate has decided just to crib that version.



Too hot in the hot tub

The bill is oddly silent on some big issues but willing to wade into regulatory minutiae. It doesn't just aim to curb greenhouse gas emissions, the bill aims to curb electric consumption by people who just want to unwind after work. But more on that later.

The bill is certainly comprehensive with sections covering everything from renewable energy to clean coal to the construction of a national smart grid and an economy-wide cap-and-trade program. And it puts special emphasis on energy efficiency, with a whole title of the bill dedicated to new building codes, new fuel-economy standards, and new efficiency targets for utilities.

The efficiency section gets attention, which is odd considering other seemingly crucial points were glossed over. The 648-page bill did not dedicate a single line to addressing big-picture questions such as how carbon-emissions permits will be distributed or what will be done with the presumptive cap-and-trade revenues.

Yet the bill's authors took the time to dictate new efficiency standards in excruciating detail. If you're planning on putting a slanted roof on a new house, get ready for one standard for "initial solar reflectance" for "fiberglass asphalt-shingle roofing," and a different standard for other types of shingles.

Or take light fixtures. The bill found 10 pages just for portable lighting. If you're curious, that means a new raft of standards for things like "art work light fixtures"—and yes, those are the lights affixed on the bottom of picture frames. Christmas lights, on the other hand, escape any new regulation.

Certain appliances also got the juices flowing. Reflecting perhaps California's disproportionate influence in Congress these days—Henry Waxman is the chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee—one sub-section is dedicated to something called "portable electric spas." Yes, that's just what it sounds like.

Sensing that middle America's populist rage is secretly directed at the energy consumption of hot tubs, the bill lays down the law—in its own way: "Effective January 1, 2012, portable electric spas shall not have a normalized standby power greater than $5(V/23)$ Watts where V =the fill volume in gallons."

Here's another take on the proper heating of hot tubs. Think Eddie Murphy.

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Los Angeles Times

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From the Los Angeles Times

HOUSING SCENE

What the expanded remodeling tax credit means for consumers

The federal credit for many improvements to make homes more energy-efficient has been tripled to 30%.
By Lew Sichelman

April 5, 2009

Reporting from Washington — Lost in the news of an expanded tax credit for home buyers is perhaps an even better deal for people who already own homes and want to make them more energy-efficient.

Both are part of the latest economic stimulus package signed by President Obama in February. But while lawmakers saw fit to boost the buyer tax credit by a mere \$500, to \$8,000, they tripled the benefit available for the remodeling tax credit.

Under the old remodeling credit, which was part of the economic rescue package enacted last fall, homeowners could claim a credit equal to 10% of the cost of energy-efficient windows, doors, roofing, insulation, furnaces, air-conditioning systems and heat pumps. They could claim 10% of the cost of each product, up to a lifetime cap of \$500.

But like builders, who contended that the original \$7,500 tax credit for first-time buyers wasn't enough to bring people back into the housing market, especially since it had to be paid back, remodelers maintained that the energy credit wasn't sufficient to persuade owners to make upgrades.

So Congress upped the ante, raising the per-item credit to 30% of the cost and boosting the lifetime ceiling to \$1,500. It also extended the deadline for making the improvements to the end of 2010.

What's more, the act is retroactive to Jan. 1, so if a product that met the previous criteria -- under the rule in effect from Jan. 1 through Feb. 17 -- was purchased and installed during that period, it still qualifies for the larger bonus.

Note that a tax credit differs from a tax deduction in that it reduces the amount of tax you have to pay. For example, if you owe \$800 in taxes and earn a \$300 credit, you will owe only \$500. Or if you owe nothing, you will get a \$300 refund. A deduction, on the other hand, reduces the amount of income subject to tax. So if your taxable income is \$35,000 and you have a \$500 deduction, your taxable income is reduced to \$34,500.

The stimulus package also expanded the list of permissible improvements by including solar-energy panels and water heaters, geothermal heat pumps, small wind-energy systems and fuel cells. Moreover, while the 30% credit applies to the added products, there is no cap on their cost, and the credit is available through 2016.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the new provisions should generate an estimated \$6 billion in remodeling work by the end of next year.

Industry research suggests that remodeling and retrofitting the nation's older homes will have a more significant effect on reducing residential energy consumption than meeting even the most aggressive efficiency goals for new homes. A study last year in California found that homes built before 1983 were responsible for 70% of the greenhouse emissions related to single-family envelope energy consumption (the envelope is the separation between the interior and the exterior environments of a building).

Here are some other things you should know about the federal tax credit for energy-efficient home improvements:

* Covered costs. Installation costs are covered for some -- but not all -- improvements. For windows, doors, insulation and new roofs, only the cost of materials is eligible for the credit. Installation is covered for HVAC (heating, ventilation and cooling) systems, as well as solar water heaters, solar panels, geothermal heat pumps, wind-energy systems and fuel cells.

The credit for HVAC systems and non-solar water heaters is 30% of the cost of the product plus installation costs, up to \$1,500. It is the same for solar water heaters, solar panels, wind-energy systems and fuel cells, except that there is no maximum.

* Not covered. A number of simple steps homeowners can take to improve efficiency are not eligible for the rebate. They include changing or adding refrigerators, dishwashers, clothes washers, room air conditioners, insulated siding, ceiling fans, programmable thermostats, electric storage-tank water heaters and electric tankless water heaters.

* Windows and doors. Window components such as sashes do not qualify. You must purchase an entire window unit. Sliding glass patio doors and French doors are eligible as long as they meet certain criteria. Insulated garage doors are eligible too, as long as they meet the same criteria. In all cases, receipts and the manufacturer's certification statement for your taxes should be saved.

* Ratings. Under Energy Star, a joint program of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy, more than 50 product categories of appliances are labeled as to their efficiency. Generally, a household that spends \$2,000 annually on energy can save more than \$700 by choosing Energy Star-labeled products over those that don't carry the familiar yellow label.

Not all products that earn an Energy Star rating qualify for a credit, so be sure to check before you choose one over another. See

www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.pr-tax-credits for a complete breakdown of product-eligibility requirements.

In some instances, moreover, the credit is available only for the most efficient models, which typically cost more than standard products. But this is a good thing, said Greg Miedema, a Tucson contractor who heads the National Assn. of Home Builders' Remodelers Council. He believes that the credit tends to make the efficient choice the most cost-effective choice in the long run.

"When you have a choice between an HVAC unit that is super-efficient but costs a lot more than a standard unit, most homeowners are going to choose the standard unit unless they can see themselves saving money within a few years," Miedema said.

* Financing. Energy Star does not provide financing, but many of its partners do. These include state energy offices, manufacturers themselves and local utility companies, which may also offer rebates.

Homeowners can claim the credits on IRS Form 5695. Contractors need not provide you with product sales receipts to verify your claim, but you should retain the following for your records as backup: name and address of the manufacturer; identification of the component; make, model and other appropriate identifiers; statement that the product meets the tax-credit standards; climate zone for which the criteria are satisfied; and a declaration that the certification statement is true.

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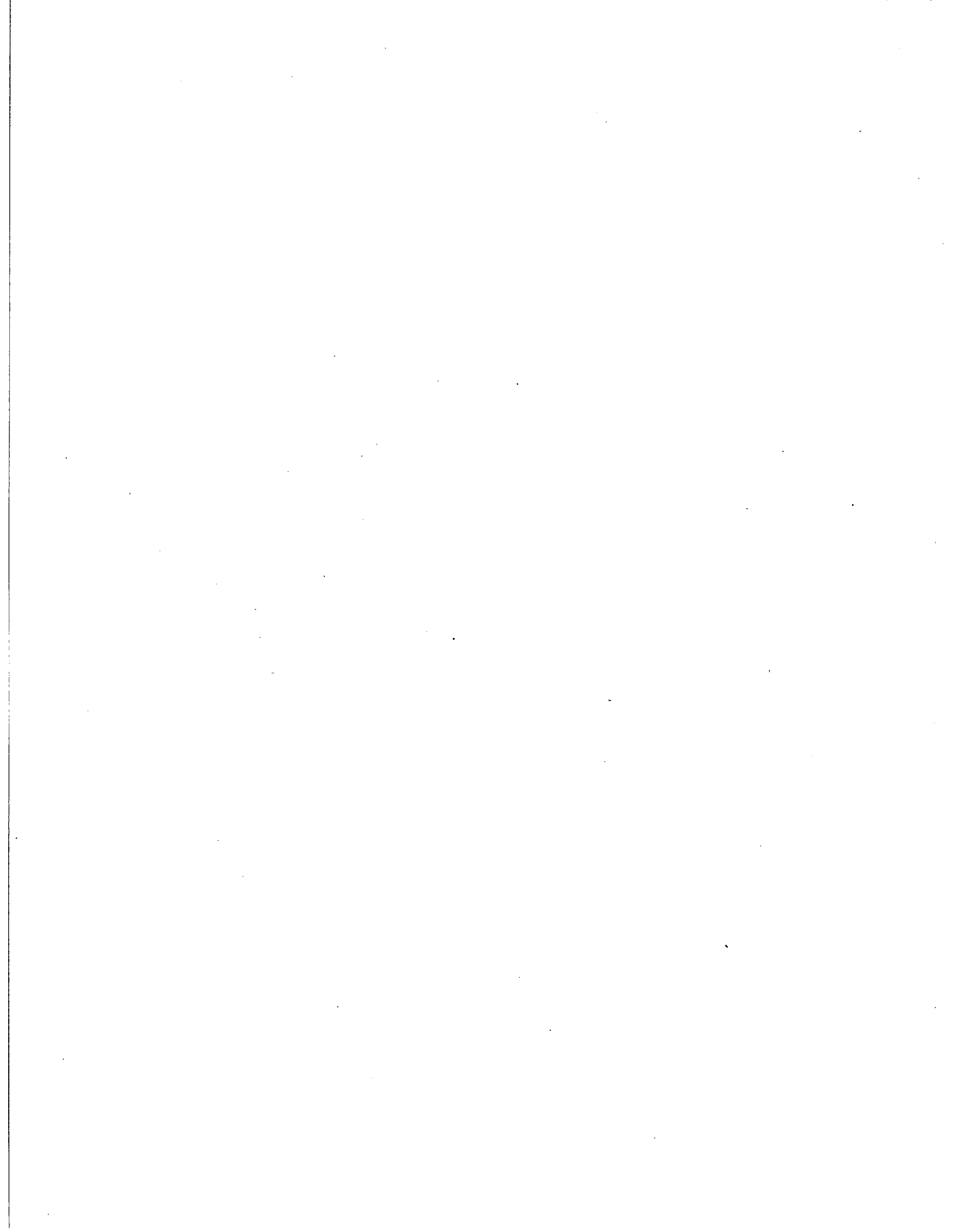
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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WSJ.com

APRIL 6, 2009, 2:24 PM ET

Ice, Ice Maybe: NASA Reports Greater Arctic Ice Melt

The winter weather across much of the world may have been a lot colder than normal, but there's no reprieve for the poles: The ice is still melting.

Just as news comes out that a Connecticut-sized chunk of Antarctica is poised to fall off the South Pole, NASA reports that ice cover on the North Pole is shrinking and getting thinner, too. That's both a sign and a cause of continued rising temperatures, and will likely give even more ammunition to environmental groups urging much quicker action by governments to tackle climate change.

NASA announced today that satellite research of the Arctic shows that maximum ice cover—the high point of Arctic ice expansion every winter—was just 96% of the average over the last 30 years. NASA notes that this winter had the “fifth lowest maximum ice extent on record. The six lowest maximum events since satellite monitoring began in 1979 have all occurred in the past six years (2004-2009).”

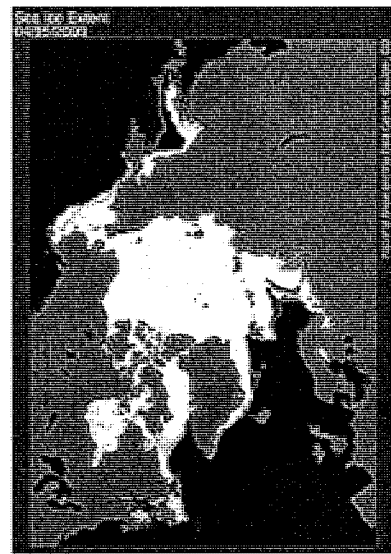
The ice is getting thinner, too—making it even more vulnerable to further melting by more warm weather, researchers said. Thin ice that melts and re-freezes every year now makes up about 70% of the Arctic, up from 40%-50% two decades ago. Thick ice that has lasted two or more years has fallen to about 10%, down from 30%-40%, according to the National Snow and Ice Data Center.

Melting ice in the Arctic and Antarctic won't necessarily fuel sea-level rises—sea ice is already floating—though it could accelerate the melting of land ice sheets, which would affect sea levels.

Arctic melting could be a problem in two other ways. As any skier knows, vast white expanses reflect sunlight. The more ice in the Arctic, the greater the earth's “albedo,” or ability to reflect solar rays.

Arctic ice also cools oceans, circulating cooler water back south that helps regulate temperatures around the globe. The less ice there is in the Arctic, the less effective the earth's primitive air-conditioning system is.

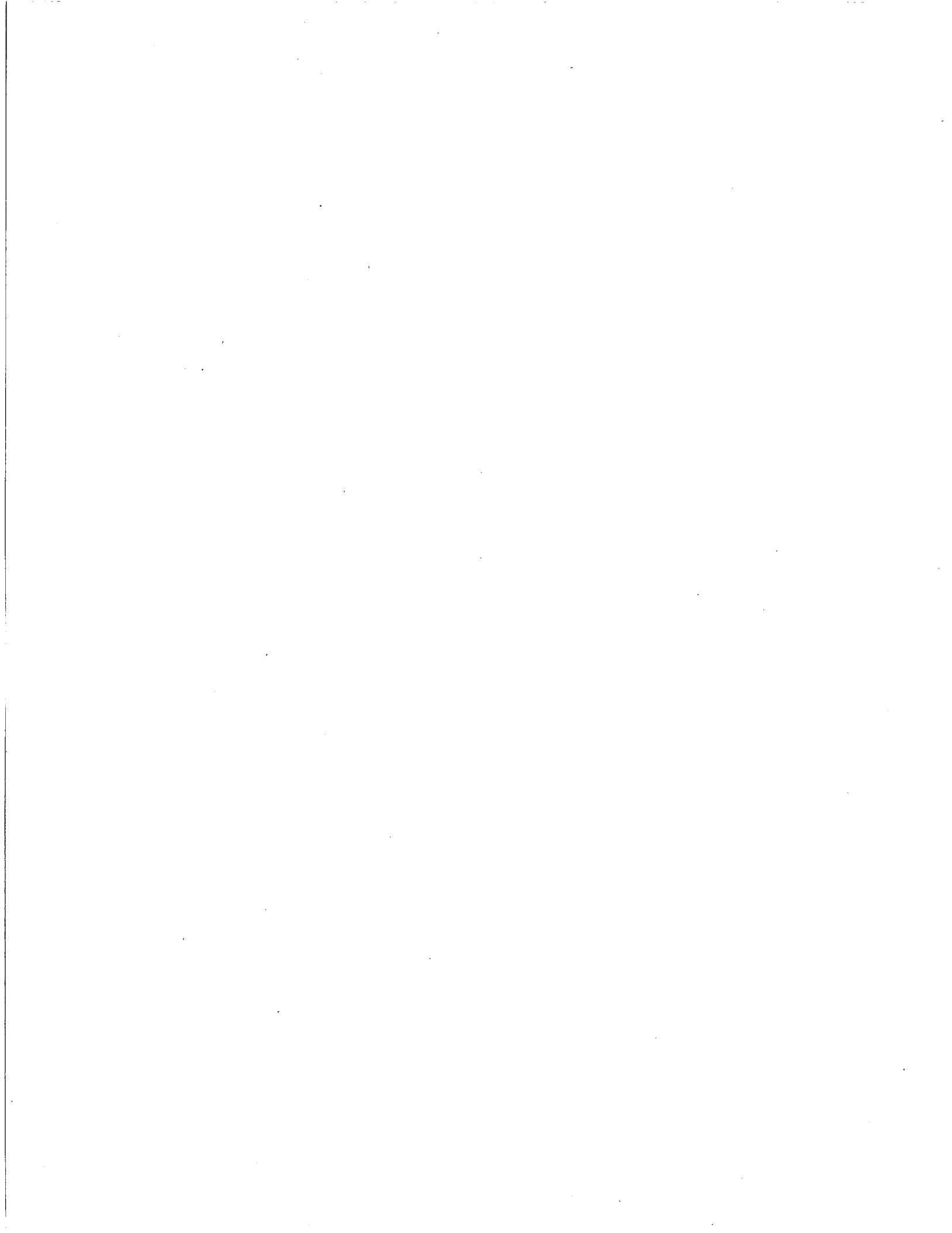
Of course, the big question remains the same: When it comes time to shaping energy and climate policy, will Arctic ice melt be enough to outweigh the economic meltdown?



Orange line marks the normal ice extension (NSIDC)

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Breakaway Ice Shelf Would Reshape Map of Antarctica

Monday , April 06, 2009

THE  TIMES

A vast Antarctic ice shelf is in danger of collapsing after the ice bridge that pinned it to land shattered over the weekend.

The Wilkins ice shelf would be the largest slab of ice to be lost by Antarctica in recent times, in what researchers say is a sign of how global warming is reshaping the map of Antarctica.

The shelf, almost half the size of Wales, is the tenth to break away or shrink to a fraction of its original size in the past 50 years.

David Vaughan of the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) said that warmer conditions in the Antarctic Peninsula caused the ice bridge to melt and that it is likely to be linked to global warming. Temperatures in the peninsula have risen 3 degrees Celsius (5.4 degrees Fahrenheit) in 50 years.

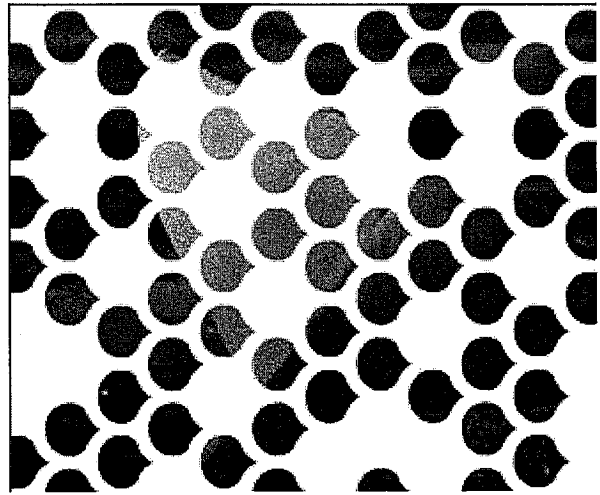
"The ice shelves that have retreated over the last few decades are the ones we would have expected to retreat because of atmospheric climate change in Antarctica," he said. "We are beginning to connect that to global changes."

He said that he was amazed by the speed of the breakup of the ice bridge and the retreat of the ice shelf. "This one was a very extensive ice shelf until the 1990s when it started retreating."

In the 1990s it measured 6,200 square miles (16,000 square km), since when it is thought to have retreated by at least half.

If the remaining ice breaks up it will be the biggest collapse on record, dwarfing the break up of the 770 square miles of the Larsen B shelf in 2002.

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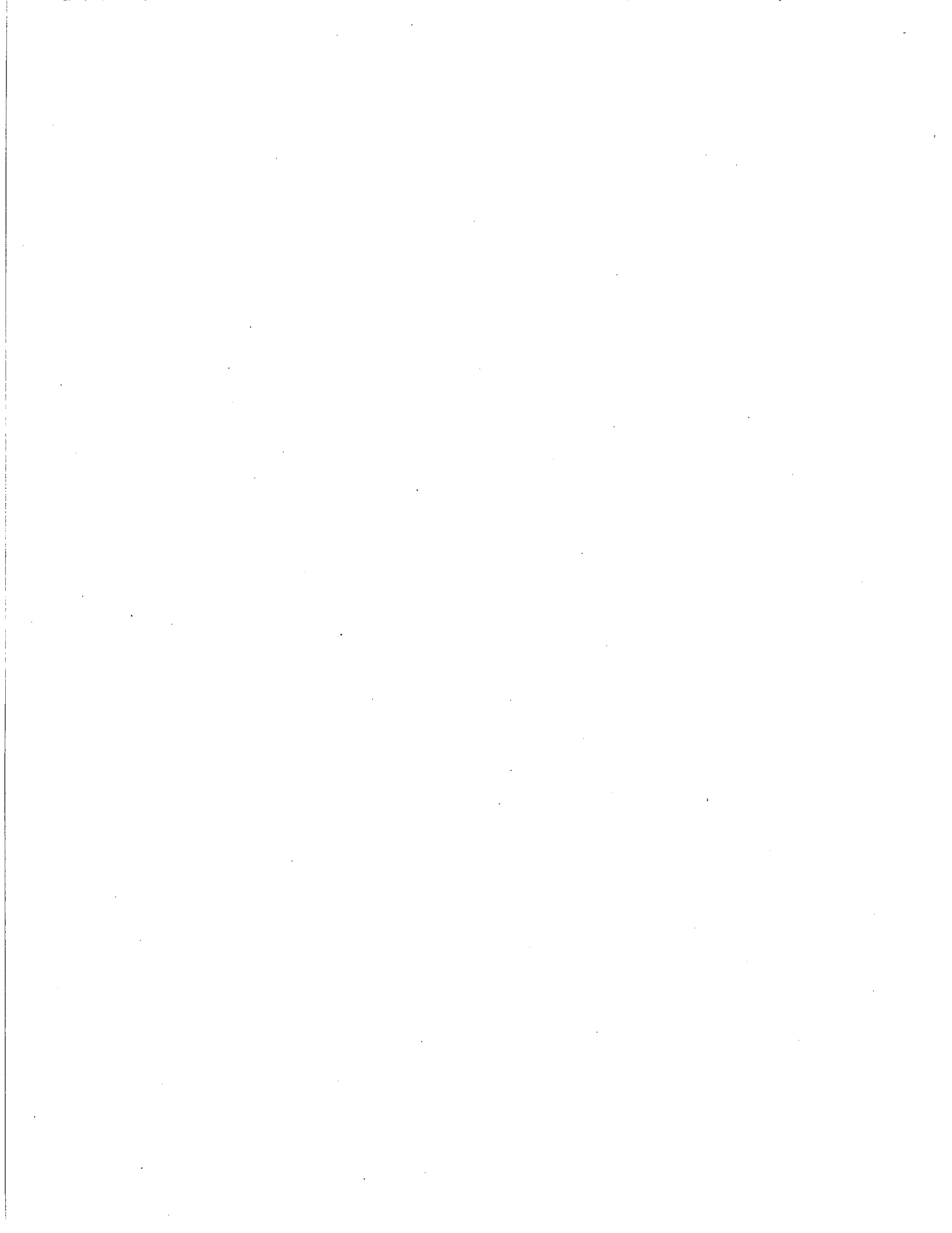
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All market data delayed 20 minutes.

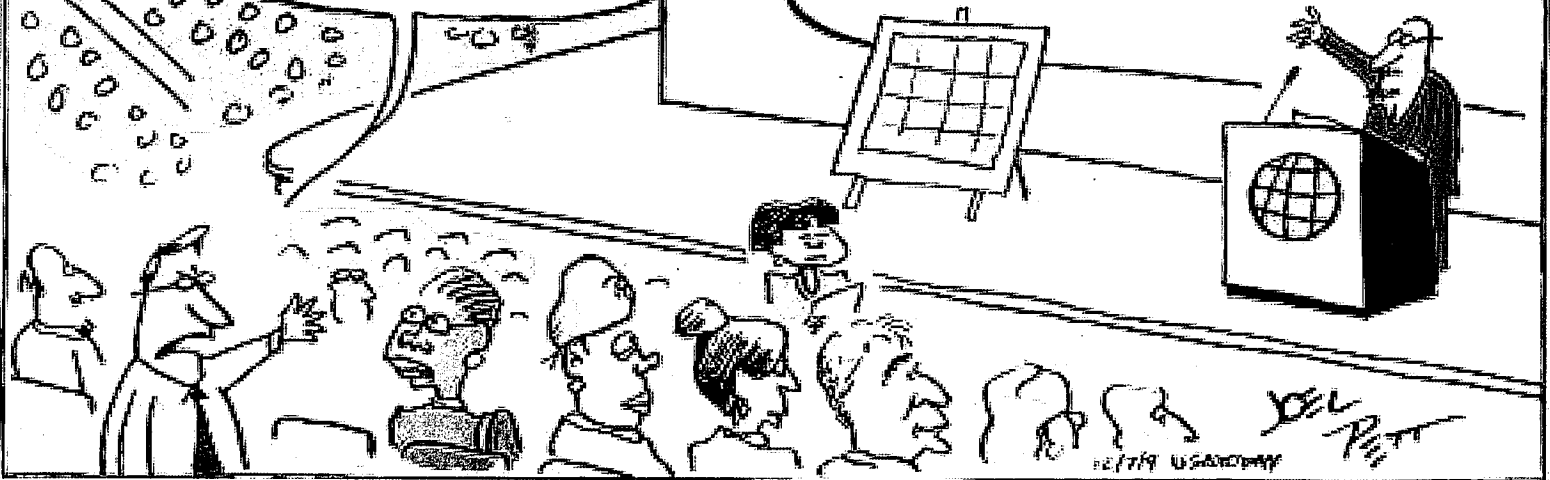




CLIMATE SUMMIT

WHAT IF IT'S
A BIG HOAX AND
WE CREATE A BETTER
WORLD FOR NOTHING?

- ENERGY INDEPENDENCE
- PRESERVE RAINFORESTS
- SUSTAINABILITY
- GREEN JOBS
- LIVABLE CITIES
- RENEWABLES
- CLEAN WATER, AIR
- HEALTHY CHILDREN
- ETC. ETC.



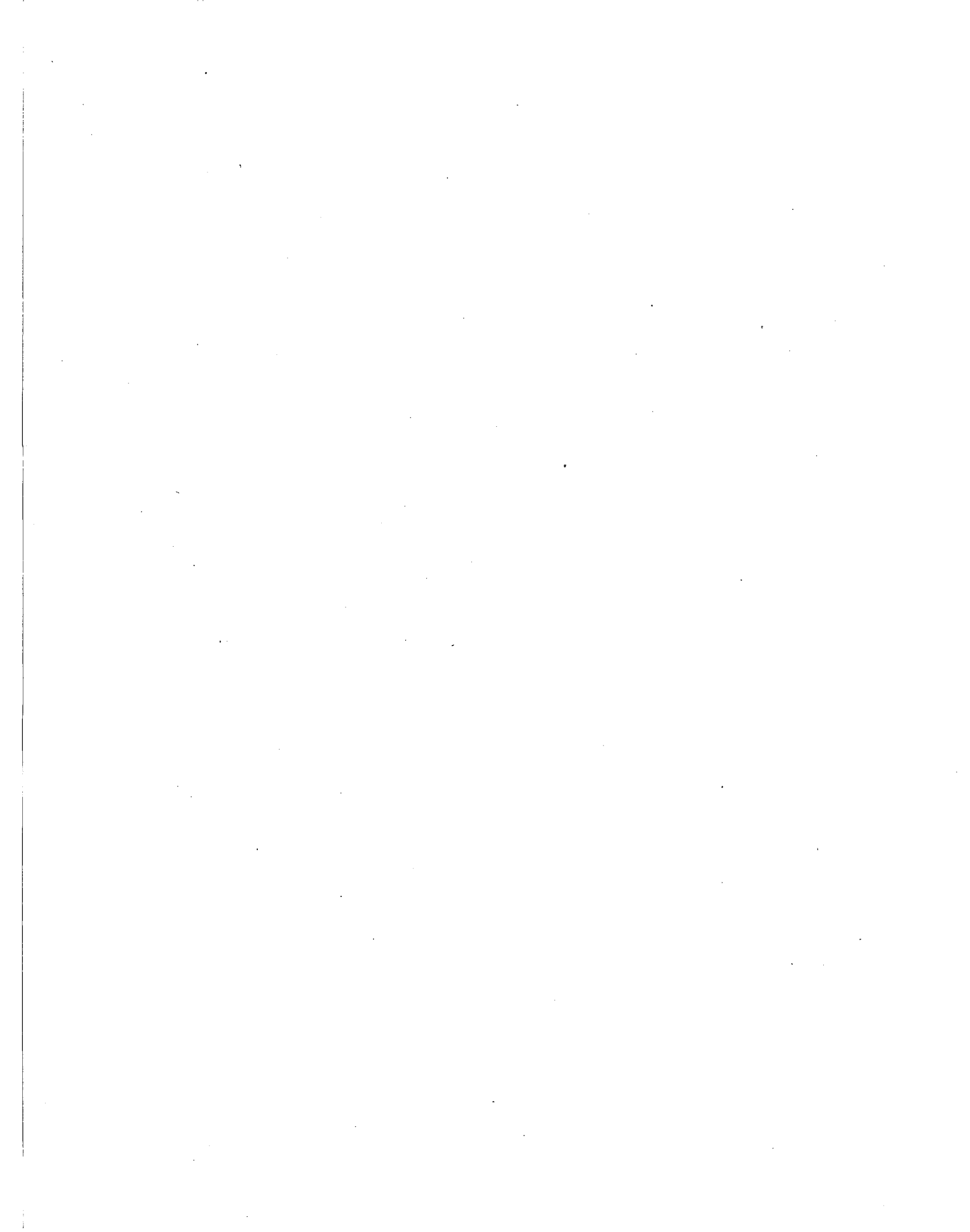
"Climate Science In Denial" (op-ed, April 22), Richard Lindzen's attempt to catapult a series of minor errors into a sweeping condemnation of climate science, represents an irresponsible and misleading attempt to substitute polemic for reason. While ignoring the vast body of evidence of ongoing climate change, from increasing sea level to retreating glaciers, from basic theory to advanced climate models, Mr. Lindzen clings to his agenda of denial, advancing spurious hypotheses that have been thoroughly refuted in the peer-reviewed literature, even by climate scientists otherwise inclined toward a conservative view of the issue.

No climate scientist denies that the present state of the science entails large uncertainties in climate projections, with possible outcomes ranging from benign to catastrophic. While science works to reduce these uncertainties, citizens must decide whether and how much resource should be devoted to mitigating the uncertainly estimated risk.

Prof. Kerry Emanuel

Mass. Institute of Technology

Cambridge, Mass.



The New York Times

Green

A Blog About Energy and the Environment

JUNE 10, 2009, 11:20 AM

Study Cites Strong Green Job Growth

By KATE GALBRAITH

A new study says that the number of green jobs in the United States grew 9.1 percent between 1998 and 2007, about two and a half times faster than job growth in the economy as a whole.

Where the green jobs are, according to Pew. Click image to see full-sized map.

The study, from the Pew Charitable Trusts, also breaks down green job growth on a state-by-state basis.

Green jobs are defined here as those belonging to the “clean energy economy,” which the study calls one that “generates jobs, businesses and investments while expanding clean energy production, increasing energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse-gas emissions, waste and pollution, and conserving water and other natural resources.”

Unsurprisingly, California has the most green jobs — more than 125,000 — followed by Texas at over 55,000. Oregon is the only state where green jobs represented more than 1 percent of employment.

Idaho led the way in green job growth, with 126 percent more such jobs over that time period, followed by Nebraska at 109 percent. New Mexico, Oregon and Kansas all posted just above 50 percent green-job growth.

Nine states — including New York and New Jersey — saw the number of green jobs decline from 1998 to 2007, with the largest loss (albeit from a small base) coming in Utah.

A number of states — Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska and Ohio, as well as the District of Columbia — experienced job losses in the overall economy from 1998 to 2007, but added green jobs.

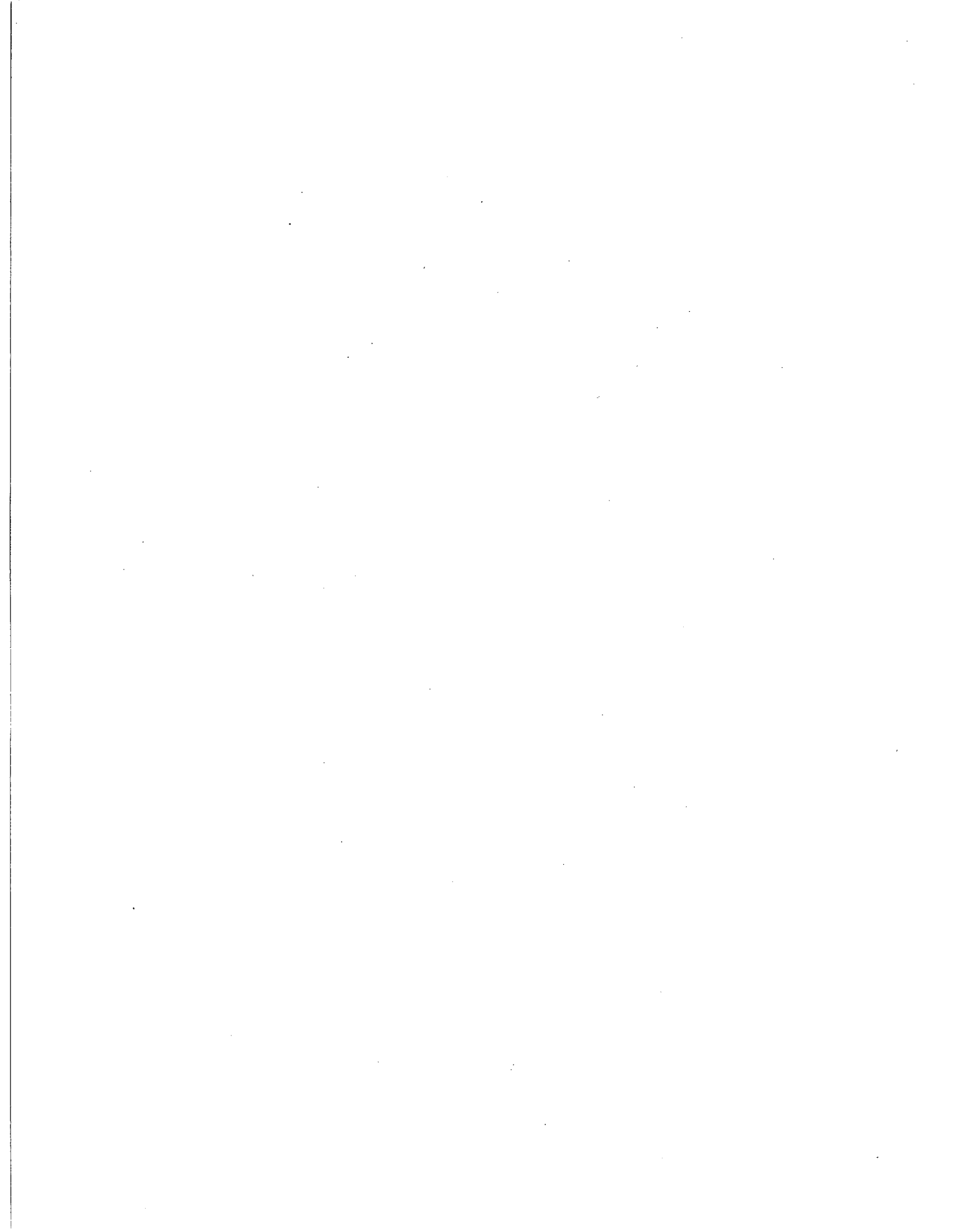
Over all, some 770,000 jobs in the nation are tied to the clean energy economy, the Pew researchers found — and they predicted more growth in the sector. By way of comparison, the “fossil fuel sector” of utilities, coal mining and oil and gas extraction accounted for 1.27 million jobs in 2007, the study said.

The study also discusses clean technology patents. The lion’s share — nearly 47 percent — of the clean-tech patents registered between 1999 and 2008 have been for batteries

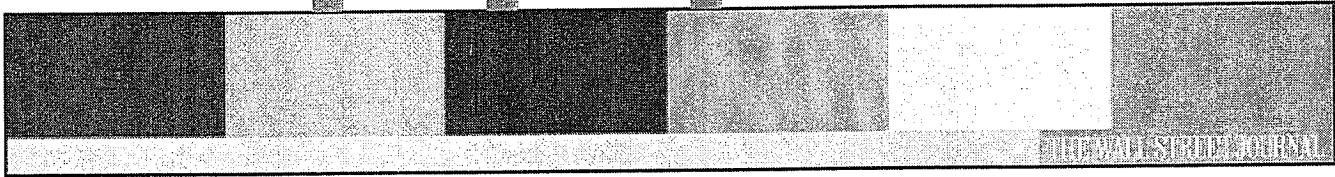
(although the number of battery patents is falling). The next largest share was fuel cells at 25.6 percent. Solar accounted for 8.7 percent of total clean-tech patents.

Other studies have forecast green job growth potential as the Obama administration promotes alternative energy sources.

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WSJ.com

U.S. NEWS | JULY 3, 2009

Climate Declaration To Get Global Boost

By JONATHAN WEISMAN

WASHINGTON -- The U.S., European Union and 12 of the world's largest nations plan to embrace "an aspirational goal" of reducing emissions of global-warming gases by 50% by 2050, according to a draft declaration by world leaders set for release next week in Italy.

The draft, seen by The Wall Street Journal, sets up a framework for detailed negotiations on the issue ahead of a United Nations climate conference in December. But it leaves key areas in the climate-change debate in dispute. The draft is subject to change ahead of a meeting of global leaders starting Wednesday.

The declaration recognizes a "broad scientific view" that global temperatures shouldn't rise more than two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, but doesn't lock in the "two-degree ceiling" that some nations and environmentalists want. Global temperatures currently are about 0.8 degree Celsius above those levels.

World Leaders to Pledge Reduction of Emissions

1:57



A group of leaders from 13 nations plans to issue a draft declaration at next week's G-8 summit that pledges a 50% reduction in harmful global-warming emissions by 2050. WSJ's Jonathan Weisman reports.

The base year against which emissions reductions will be measured continues to divide the U.S. and Europe. The EU would like reductions measured against 1990 emissions levels. The U.S. favors the baseline be based on more-recent data. And the draft declaration sets a provisional target of \$400 billion for assistance to developing countries to lower their emissions and adapt to rising temperatures and sea levels, which some countries say is too low.

"There is still lots of finger pointing," said Alden Meyer, policy director at the Union of Concerned Scientists, a scientific organization favoring strict emissions controls, who has been involved in the talks.

Climate change is one of the topics on the agenda for the summit of the Group of Eight largest industrial countries, which will be held in earthquake-damaged L'Aquila, Italy. The G-8 -- the U.S., Canada, Italy, France, Germany, Japan, Russia and Britain -- will meet on Wednesday, and then be joined by the five largest developing economies -- Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa -- plus Egypt in a separate meeting. By Thursday, when President Barack Obama is slated to lead the Major Economies Forum, as many as 39 countries will be represented. The summit closes Friday.

Questions are arising over how relevant the G-8 remains, with the summit taking place after the London summit of the Group of 20 largest nations in April and ahead of the G-20 meeting in Pittsburgh in September.

"On the economy itself, this will be more about exchanging views at this midpoint between the two G-20 summits than an opportunity to produce a series of specific deliverables," Michael Froman, deputy White House national-security adviser for international economic affairs, said Wednesday.

World events, including the disputed presidential election in Iran and missile launches by North Korea, will likely intrude on the agenda, analysts said.

Climate change is likely to dominate the final sessions of the conference. Participants would like to make significant progress ahead of a United Nations conference in December in Copenhagen, when a successor to the Kyoto Accord is supposed to be completed. The treaty to combat global warming expires in 2012.

The draft declaration would set a high standard -- a world-wide, 50% reduction in greenhouse-gas emissions by 2050, with developed countries reducing their emissions by at least 80%. The developing world would have a lower requirement.

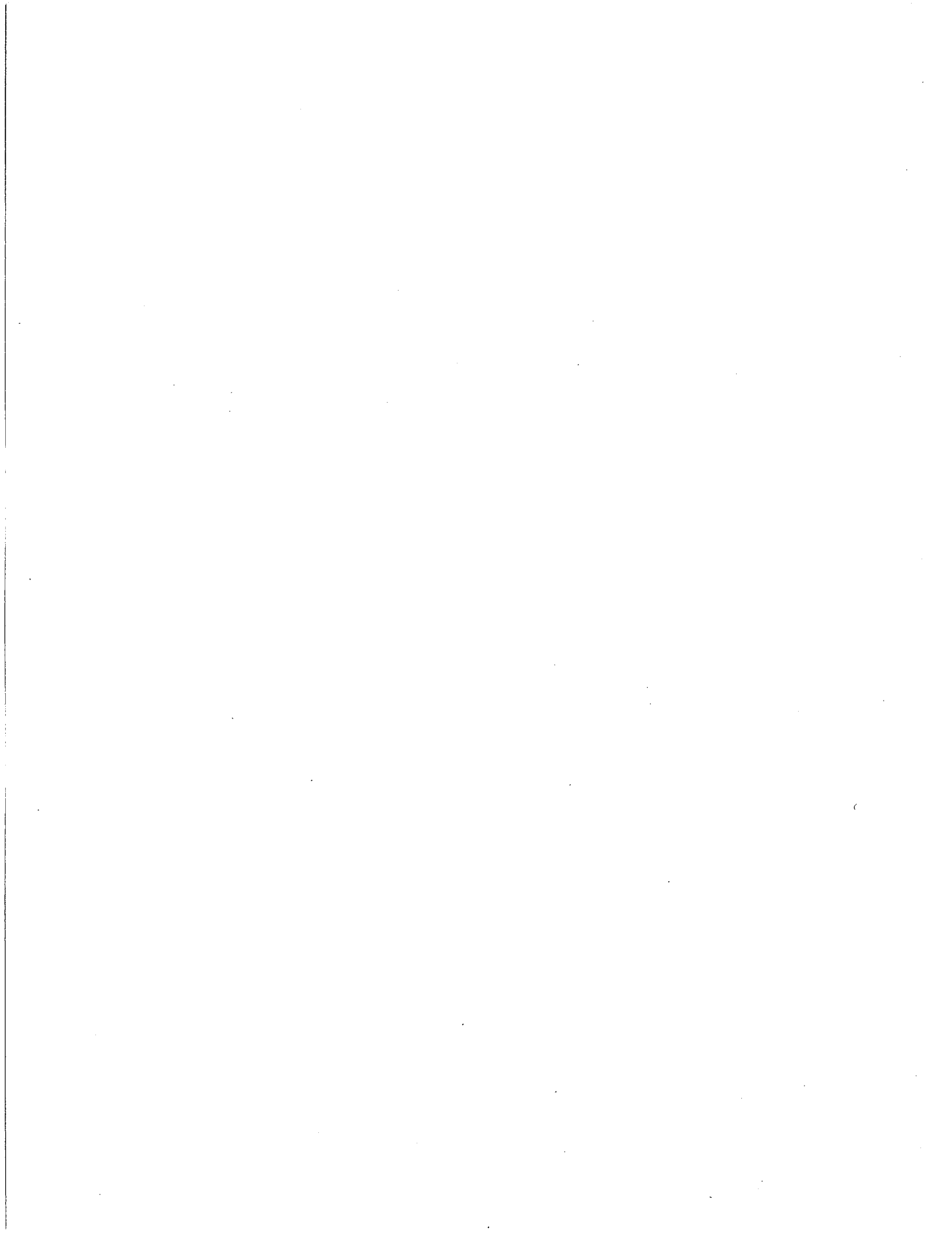
Mr. Froman, of the White House, said the aim of the summit is "to give political momentum and impetus" to climate talks ahead of the Copenhagen conference.

—Alistair MacDonald and Jeffrey Ball contributed to this article.

Write to Jonathan Weisman at jonathan.weisman@wsj.com

Printed in The Wall Street Journal, page A6

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Published on *GreenBiz.com* (<http://www.greenbiz.com>)

Green Business Forecast Shows Strong Growth Ahead

By *John Davies*
Created 2010-07-19 00:11

Our most recent green economy survey shows signs of steady growth in corporate environmental initiatives, a level of optimism that outstrips that of the overall recovering economy, according to the semi-annual "Green and the Economy" survey conducted by our GreenBiz Intelligence unit.

The two best pieces of news: Hiring continues to increase and company environmental budgets are growing.

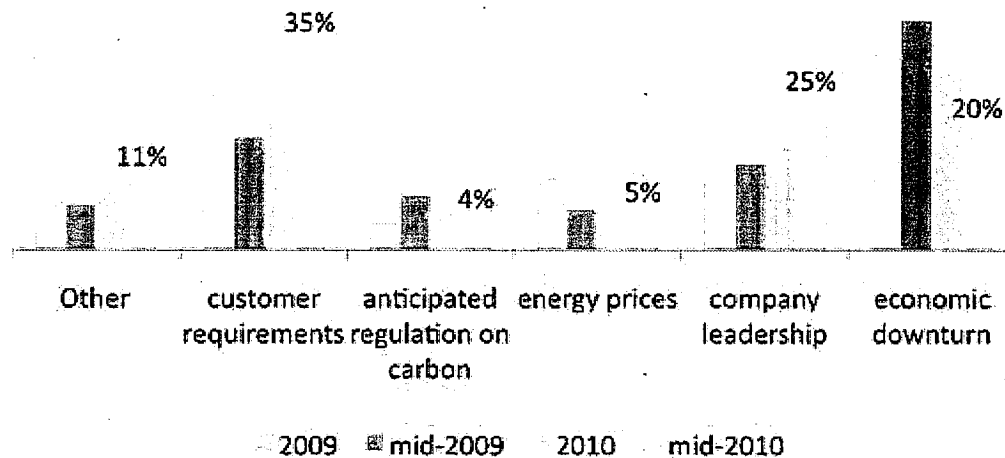
Twice a year, we ask our 3,150-member GreenBiz Intelligence Panel for their views on key green economic indicators. Our most recent survey, conducted in late June and early July, garnered 483 responses, with 43 percent from companies with revenues of more than \$1 billion (which we define as "large companies"). With four such surveys under our belts, we can now see clear trends in the green economy since the beginning of 2009.

Perhaps the biggest shift since our previous survey, in late 2009, is that the economic downturn is no longer driving most large companies' environmental strategy. For companies with over \$1 billion in annual revenue, the economic downturn has taken a backseat to growing customer requirements as the principal driver of corporate environmental strategy. For smaller firms, the economy still looms large.

Here's what our most recent survey found:

The economy is no longer the green driver. A year ago, when we asked what was influencing companies most in terms of environmental issues, the answer was clear: It's the economy, stupid. Forty-eight percent of all businesses and 40 percent of large businesses cited the economic downturn as having the single biggest impact on their environmental strategy. Today, for large businesses, this is no longer the case: Only 20 percent cite the economy as driving their green agenda, while 35 percent of large companies name customer requirements as having the largest impact and 25 percent identify company leadership as being the main driver. In fact, company leadership has steadily increased in influence: In early 2009, only half as many large companies -- 12 percent -- identified this as the major impact on their environmental strategy.

What is impacting your company most in terms of environmental issues?*



*Responses from companies with revenues greater than \$1 billion.

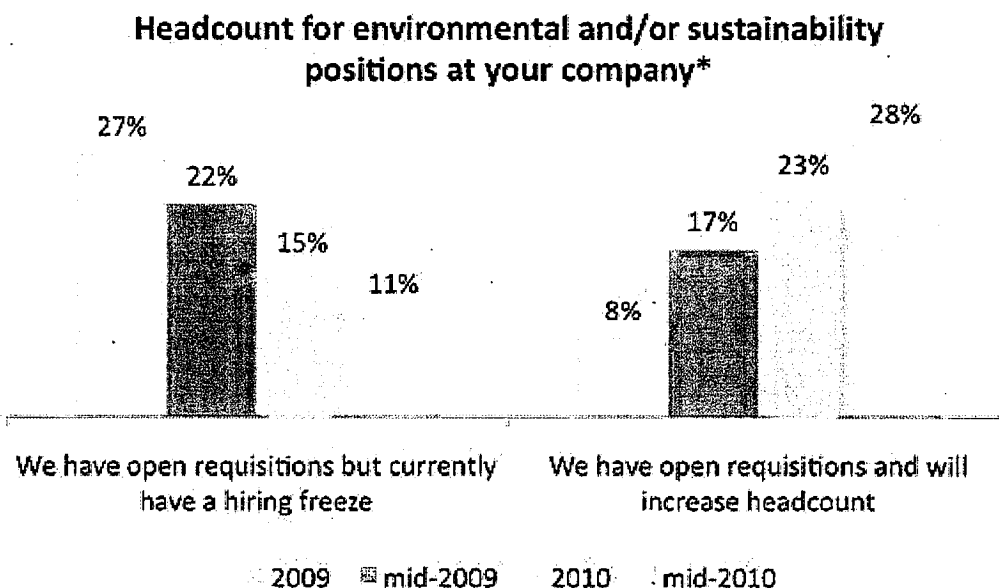
Source: "Green and the Economy," GreenBiz Intelligence, July 2010.

Smaller firms are still seeing the effects of the economic downturn. Of those with revenues under \$1 billion, 47 percent still cite the economic downturn as having the greatest impact on their company in terms of environmental issues. For all companies, the impacts of carbon regulations as well as energy prices are viewed as negligible.

Next Page: The latest trends for spending, hiring freezes, top environmental initiatives and investment.

<!--pagebreak--> **Spending continues its upward climb.** At this point in 2009, only 63 percent of large companies said they would spend either the same or more than the previous year on environmental, health, and safety initiatives. This year, 84 percent of large companies say they are doing so. And 70 percent of companies with revenues under \$1 billion report that their 2010 spending will either remain steady or increase over 2009.

Hiring freezes continue to thaw. Large companies, in particular, are increasing headcount for environmental and sustainability roles. In early 2009, 27 percent of large companies reported hiring freezes and only 8 percent planned to increase headcount for environmental departments. Today, only 11 percent report hiring freezes and over 28 percent plan to increase headcount, a major swing. This also represents a significant increase from just six months ago, when 23 percent of the large firms planned to increase headcount. The news isn't quite as good for smaller firms: only 20 percent plan to hire for environmental and sustainability roles in the short term.



*Responses from companies with revenues greater than \$1 billion.

Source: "Green and the Economy," GreenBiz Intelligence, July 2010.

Energy efficiency remains job one. Reducing energy use through efficiency measures continues to be the primary environmental initiative for companies of all sizes. Thirty-four percent of large companies and 26 percent of smaller companies view energy reduction as their most important environmental initiative. It was a slightly different story six months ago, when 23 percent of those surveyed identified their highest priority initiative to be increasing investments in green product development while 22 percent cited energy efficiency. This shift doesn't mark a decrease in green product investment, but rather a higher priority focus on cost savings.

Where large and smaller companies differ in terms of their key initiatives is their concern about "keeping green on the agenda." While only 18 percent of large companies are concerned about continuing their green initiatives, 30 percent of smaller companies are trying to make sure green stays on the agenda. That likely reflects the fact that environmental initiatives have made deeper inroads in larger companies, so are no longer seen as optional or expendable. Most smaller firms haven't yet reached this point.

Investments in innovation continue to grow. One area that has remained steady over the past year and a half is the high level of investments in green product development. Eighty-five percent of large companies report 2010 investments equal to or greater than last year's, a number consistent for each of our previous surveys. This time, we also asked if companies have a formal strategy for product innovation. The result: 84 percent of large companies and 82 percent of smaller firms say they do. Those strategies are more prevalent among smaller firms. Sixty-nine percent of companies with revenues below \$1 billion consider green as a key aspect of their innovation strategy, compared to 60 percent of large companies.

We'll be taking a deep dive into the intersection of sustainability and innovation at our GreenBiz Innovation Forum, October 19-20 in San Francisco. For now, while the general economy may appear to stagger forward in fits and starts, our research shows a steady forward march in green innovation and investments.

John Davies is vice president of GreenBiz Intelligence, which provides independent and unbiased research regarding green strategies and business operation, and leads the GreenBiz Executive Network, a member-based, peer-to-peer learning forum for sustainability professionals.

GreenBiz ClimateBiz GreenerBuildings GreenerComputing GreenerDesign
Employees Finance & Job Creation

Source URL: <http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2010/07/19/green-business-forecast-shows-strong-growth-ahead>



NOAA Satellite and Information Service
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National Climatic
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State of the Climate National Overview August 2009

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Climatic Data Center

Use the form below to access monthly reports.

« July 2009
National Overview Report

Report: National Overview
Year: 2009 Month: August

September 2009 »
National Overview Report

Maps and Graphics:

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--|
| August | Most Recent 3 Months | Most Recent 6 Months |
| Most Recent 12 Months | Year-to-Date | US Percent Area Very Wet/Dry/Warm/Cold |
| Annual Summary for 2008 | | |

PLEASE NOTE: All temperature and precipitation ranks and values are based on preliminary data. The ranks will change when the final data are processed, but will not be replaced on these pages. As final data become available, the most up-to-date statistics and graphics will be available on the *Climate Monitoring Products* page and the *U.S. Climate at a Glance* Web site.

For graphics covering periods other than those mentioned above or for tables of national, regional, and statewide *data* from 1895-present, for August, last 3 months or other periods, please go to the *Climate at a Glance* page.

National Overview:

Temperature Highlights - Summer

- For the 2009 summer, the average temperature of 71.7 degrees F was 0.4 degree F below the 20th Century average. The 2008 average summer temperature was 72.7 degrees F.
- The U.S. as a whole was below normal for the summer period (June-August). A recurring upper level trough held the June-August temperatures down in the central states, where Michigan experienced its fifth coolest summer, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and South Dakota their seventh coolest each, Nebraska its eighth, and Iowa its ninth coolest such period. In direct contrast, the temperatures in Florida averaged out to be fourth warmest, while Washington and Texas experienced their eighth and ninth warmest such periods, respectively.
- On a regional level, the East North Central experienced its sixth coolest summer in 115-years of record keeping. Only the Northwest averaged above normal readings during the period — their tenth consecutive summer with above-normal temperatures.

Temperature Highlights - August

- For the contiguous United States the average August temperature of 72.2°F was 0.6° F below the 20th century average and ranked as the 30th coolest August on record, based on preliminary data.
- Temperatures were below normal in the Central and East North Central regions. Above-normal temperatures dominated the Northeast, areas in the Southwest, and in the extreme Northwest.
- Several northeastern states were much above normal for August, including Delaware and New Jersey, (eighth warmest), Maine (ninth), and Rhode Island and Connecticut (10th). In contrast, below-normal temperatures were recorded for Missouri and Kansas.
- For the year-to-date (January-August) period, the contiguous U.S. ranked 30th warmest. New Mexico and Texas recorded their ninth- and tenth-warmest, respectively, such periods on record.
- Based on NOAA's Residential Energy Demand Temperature Index (REDTI), the contiguous U.S. temperature-related energy demand was 1.7 percent above average in August. For the summer period (June-August), the model indicated that the national residential energy consumption was 2.5 percent below average.

Precipitation Highlights - Summer

- For the summer season (June–August), the Northeast Region had its eighth wettest period on record. This contrasted with the South, Southeast and Southwest Regions, which were drier than average. Arizona observed its third driest summer, while both South Carolina and Georgia had their sixth driest.

Precipitation Highlights - August

- This was the 28th driest August in the 1895–2009 record. Precipitation across the contiguous U.S. averaged 2.34 inches (59 mm), which is 0.26 inch (7 mm) below the 1901–2000 average.
- Above-normal averages were generally recorded across the northern U.S., west of the Great Lakes. The South and Southeast regions experienced below-normal precipitation.
- Precipitation across the Southwest region averaged 0.85 inches, which is 1.10 inches below normal and ranks as the 4th driest August on record. Arizona had its fourth driest, New Mexico its fifth, and it was the eighth driest August on record for Colorado, Utah and Texas.
- Lack of monsoonal moisture contributed to the near record dryness in the Southwest region. Tucson, Arizona experienced its driest August since 1976 and its third driest since 1948.

Other Items of Note

- By the end of August, moderate-to-exceptional drought covered 14 percent of the contiguous United States, based on the U.S. Drought Monitor. Drought intensified in parts of the Pacific Northwest and new drought areas emerged in Arizona and parts of the Carolinas. Elsewhere, drought areas generally persisted, with minor improvements in Montana, Wisconsin, and Oklahoma.
- A total of 7,975 fires burned 1,646,363 acres in August, according to the National Interagency Coordination Center. August 2009 ranked fifth for the number of fires and sixth for acres burned in August this decade. For the year-to-date period (Jan-Aug), 64,682 fires burned 5.2 million acres across the nation. Late month fire activity, particularly in California, extending into September is likely to increase 2009 acreage burned relative to the 2000–2009 average. More detail information on U.S. wildfire activity can be found [here](#).
- There were more than 300 record low minimum and maximum temperatures set across the Central and East North Central regions during the last two days of August as Canadian high pressure settled over the area at the end of the month.
- Several intense precipitation events occurred among generally wetter-than-normal conditions in the southern Appalachians and mid-Atlantic. Slow-moving thunderstorms in dropped 9.70 inches of rain at Cherry Point, NC, establishing the location's greatest one-day precipitation total in a record extending back 65 years. Most of the rain fell in three hours, representing a precipitation rate that equates with nearly a 500-year event.
- The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) reported that El Niño was present in the equatorial Pacific Ocean during the month of August. Equatorial sea surface temperatures (SSTs) remained +0.5 to +1.5°C above average across the region at the end of the month. Observations and model forecasts by the CPC indicate El Niño conditions will continue to intensify and are expected to continue through the winter of 2009-2010. For additional information on ENSO conditions, please visit the [NCDC](#)

ENSO Monitoring page and the latest NOAA ENSO Advisory.

Alaska:

- Alaska had its 46th warmest August since records began in 1918, with a temperature 0.9°F (0.5°C) below the 1971—2000 average.
- Alaska had its 13th warmest June—August on record, with a temperature 0.9°F (0.5°C) above the 1971—2000 average.
- Alaska had its 28th warmest January—August on record, with a temperature 0.4°F (0.2°C) above the 1971—2000 average.

For additional details about recent temperatures and precipitation across the U.S., see the Regional Highlights section below and visit the May Climate Summary page. For information on local temperature and precipitation records during the month of July, please visit NCDC's Extremes page. For details and graphics on weather *events* across the U.S. and the globe please visit NCDC's Global Hazards page.

Regional Highlights:

These regional summaries were provided by the six Regional Climate Centers and reflect conditions in their respective regions. These six regions differ spatially from the nine climatic regions of the National Climatic Data Center.

Northeast | Midwest | Southeast | High Plains | Southern | Western

Northeast Region: *(Information provided by the Northeast Regional Climate Center)*

- Temperatures during August averaged above normal, breaking the cool trend of the previous two months. The Northeast average of 69.9°F (21.1 °C) was 1.9 degrees F (1.1 °C) above normal. Departures among the states ranged from 0.7 degrees F (0.4 °C) above normal in West Virginia to 2.9 degrees F (1.6 °C) above normal in Maine, where it was the 10th warmest August since 1895. Other temperature rankings are below. In general, the eastern half of the region saw the greatest positive departures; farther west, the departures were closer to normal. Most locations saw their highest temperatures during the third week of the month and the lowest at the end of August.
- Rainfall in the Northeast averaged 100% of normal, but there was a great disparity in the totals throughout the region. Five states (Rhode Island, Connecticut, West Virginia, Vermont, Maine) saw below normal rainfall. Of these states, Rhode Island was the driest, with only 50% of the normal August amount. Delaware was the wettest state this month with 207% of normal rainfall. In addition, Delaware's total of 9.61 inches (24.41 cm) made this month the 9th wettest in 115 years. These two states also had the rainfall extremes last month, but in the opposite direction - Delaware had its 3rd

driest July on record, while Rhode Island had its 2nd wettest July.

- On August 9, a line of thunderstorms spawned an EF-1 tornado and a derecho that caused widespread damage in Allegany County, NY. Later on the 9th, up to 5 inches (12.7 cm) of rain in a 2-hour time period flooded parts of northern Chautauqua and northwestern Cattaraugus Counties, NY. Significant damage occurred in Silver Creek and Gowanda, NY as creeks and streams turned into raging torrents. More information on the western New York severe weather can be found at this web site: http://www.erh.noaa.gov/buf/svrwx/web_090810_Flashflood/indexflood.html. Other reports of severe weather this month include straight-line winds that downed over a hundred trees in Central Park, NY on the 19th and an EF-1 tornado in Oxford County, ME on the 21st that snapped or uprooted thousands of trees and damaged or destroyed a few buildings.
- It was the 9th wettest summer in the Northeast. The total of 14.44 inches (36.68 cm) was 119% of normal. West Virginia, the only state to average below normal rainfall, received 92% of the normal summer total. At the other end of the spectrum, Massachusetts saw 152% of normal rainfall. It was the 3rd wettest summer in Massachusetts, and the 6th wettest in Maine and New Hampshire. Among individual locations, it was the wettest summer in Portland, Maine, Concord, New Hampshire and Albany, New York.

For more information, please go to the Northeast Regional Climate Center Home Page.

Midwest Region: *(Information provided by the Midwest Regional Climate Center)*

- The unseasonably cool weather of July continued into the month of August throughout the Midwest. Temperatures in August were near normal in eastern Ohio, dropping to 3°F (1.7°C) below normal in western portions of the region. The 10-day period from August 8-17 was the only substantially warm period during the month, with temperatures averaging near normal across Missouri to 5°F (2.8°C) above normal in the northern portions of the Midwest. Average daily low temperatures during the month were near to slightly above normal in eastern Ohio decreasing to 2°F to 3°F (1.1°C to 1.7°C) west of the Mississippi River. The cool weather was dramatically seen in the average daily maximum temperatures, which were near normal in eastern Ohio but as much as 6°F (3.3°C) below normal in western portions of the region. Based on preliminary August temperature data, this was the 21st coolest August on record for the Midwest. There were more than 300 record low minimum and maximum temperatures set across the region the last two days of August as Canadian high pressure settled over the area at the end of the month.
- Frontal systems repeatedly moved out of the Northern Plains and into the Midwest in August, providing a focus for showers and thunderstorms. These systems frequently slowed or stalled across the central Midwest, resulting in an axis of heavy rain from northwestern Missouri through southwestern Iowa into northern Illinois. Rainfall in southeastern Iowa exceeded 13 inches (330 mm) for the month at some locations. Clutier, Iowa reported 13.65 inches (347 mm), Cedar Rapids 13.05 inches (331 mm), and there were a number of other reports of more than 10 inches (254 mm) for August. Monthly rainfall was from 175 percent to 300 percent of normal in this band. Outside of this band, rainfall in August was spotty, with some areas receiving normal

to above normal rainfall and surrounding areas less than 50 percent of normal. Significant rain fell in central Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin toward the end of the month, providing some improvement in the drought situation there. However, at the end of the month drought was still classified as severe in northwestern Wisconsin and the southern Michigan U. P.

- All nine Midwestern states experienced severe weather during August. The majority of the severe reports this month came on August 4 and on August 19-20. The storms on August 19 included 30 tornado reports in seven Midwestern states, including at least one twister that touched down in downtown Minneapolis, Minnesota.

For details on the weather and climate events of the Midwest during May, see the weekly summaries in the MRCC Midwest Climate Watch page.

Southeast Region: *(Information provided by the Southeast Regional Climate Center)*

- Mean temperatures for August 2009 were above normal across much of the region, especially eastern Virginia, North Carolina, and portions of Florida where temperatures were 2 to 4°F above normal. There were 79 daily maximum temperature records set or tied, and more than half of these were observed in Florida. There were no heat waves during the month, although several metropolitan areas experienced daily maximums near 100 F (38°C), including Columbia, South Carolina, Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, Richmond, Virginia, and Washington, DC. Much of Puerto Rico recorded above normal temperatures for the month. San Juan, Puerto Rico registered a mean temperature of 84 F (29°C), which was 2°F above normal. Temperatures across portions of Georgia and most of Alabama were slightly below normal. There were 97 daily minimum temperatures broken or tied across the region with a majority of them recorded in Alabama and Florida. Mobile, Alabama recorded a minimum temperature of 60°F (16°C) on the 24th, which ranks as the third coolest minimum in August for a record extending back to 1872. Also, Troy, Alabama recorded a minimum temperature of 58°F (14°C) on the 10th of the month.
- Much of the region displayed below normal precipitation totals for the month of August. This was especially the case across SC where some locales received less than 25% of the normal precipitation for the month. Greenville-Spartanburg, South Carolina recorded only 1.21 inches (31 mm) of precipitation during the month, which ranks as the 10th driest August in a record that extends all of the way back to 1893. This dry streak that began in June is most revealed in the modest June-August precipitation total of 6.28 inches (160 mm), which ranks as the 4th driest on record. Monthly precipitation totals were above normal across portions of Alabama, western Georgia, South Carolina, and portions of southwest and far eastern Virginia. Norfolk, Virginia recorded a monthly precipitation total of 13.22 inches (336 mm) making it the 3rd wettest August for a record extending back to 1874. Over 5 inches (127 mm) of this precipitation fell in a 3-hour period on the 22nd, which caused major urban flooding. Slow-moving thunderstorms in Craven Co. North Carolina dropped 9.70 inches (246 mm) of precipitation over Cherry Point, which is the greatest one day precipitation total in a record extending back 65 years. Most of this precipitation fell in 3 hours resulting in a precipitation rate that equates with nearly a 500-year event. In Savannah, Georgia, locally heavy rainfall exceeding 4 inches (102 mm) caused major flash flooding that involved the rescue of people from vehicles caught in the

floodwaters. The early evening deluge coincided with the occurrence of high tide thus making the floodwaters higher.

- The continued dry conditions in portions of the Carolinas resulted in the development of moderate drought (D1) conditions in NW South Carolina and a small portion of east-central North Carolina. This was circumscribed by a broader area of abnormally dry conditions extending from the eastern half of North Carolina southwestward through northern South Carolina and portions of northeast Georgia. Tropical Storm Claudette made landfall in western Florida on 8/17 with relatively modest winds and precipitation totals. Coastal North Carolina experienced rough surf associated with the offshore passage of Hurricane Bill and Tropical Storm Danny in August. The rough surf and strong undertow were blamed for the loss of a 12-year old boy near Corolla as Tropical Storm Danny passed. Lightning from thunderstorms caused house fires in a number of locations during the month, including Atlanta, Georgia and Surry, Co. North Carolina, where several firefighters were injured.

For more information, please go to the Southeast Regional Climate Center Home Page.

High Plains Region: *(Information provided by the High Plains Regional Climate Center)*

- A persistent upper air pattern continued to keep the High Plains Region cool this August. Most locations had average monthly temperatures that were 2°F to 4°F (1.1°C to 2.2°C) below normal and isolated areas of the Region were 4°F to 8°F (2.2°C to 4.4°C) below normal. Monte Vista, Colorado recorded its coolest August with an average temperature of 57.8°F (14.3°C), which broke the old record of 58.2°F (14.6°C) recorded in 1956. Interestingly, many locations recorded average temperatures that were nearly identical to those recorded in July. For instance, Lincoln, NE had an average temperature of 72.6 (22.6°C) in July and 72.3 (22.4°C) in August. Lincoln's normals for July and August are 77.8 (25.4°C) and 75.4 (24.1°C), respectively. For the summer, temperature departures of 2°F to 5°F (1.1°C to 2.8°C) below normal dominated the Region and many locations ranked in the top 15 coolest summers on record. The only exceptions to the mild weather were isolated pockets of Wyoming, Colorado, and Kansas. Casper, Wyoming recorded its coolest summer with an average temperature of 63.9°F (17.7°C). The previous record of 64.3°F (17.9°C) occurred in 2004.
- This August, some areas of the region received ample precipitation, while other areas were dry and saw either the development of abnormally dry conditions or little relief to ongoing drought. Precipitation totals exceeding 200% of normal were confined to pockets of Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. Within these regions of heavy precipitation, many locations recorded the wettest August on record. The driest areas in the region were Colorado and North Dakota where precipitation totals less than 50% of normal were common. This month's wet spot is Columbia, South Dakota. Not only did this location record its wettest August, it also recorded its wettest summer. Columbia received 7.22 inches (183.4 mm) of precipitation, or 313% of normal, this month which smashed the old record of 5.84 inches (148.3 mm) recorded in 1957. For the summer, Columbia received 17.90 inches (454.7 mm) of precipitation which is 9.45 inches (240.0 mm) above normal and 212% above normal. The old record of 14.45 inches (367.0 mm) was recorded in 1993.

- The two areas of moderate drought (D1) remain largely unchanged this month as drought persists in eastern North Dakota and southeast Nebraska. Both areas have seen crop stress however, impacts should be only short term as streamflows are above normal and the long term outlook is good. Due to a weak monsoon season, abnormally dry conditions (D0) have developed in southwest Colorado. Elsewhere in the Region, only minor changes were observed in the U.S. Drought Monitor. According to the U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook, the drought conditions in south central Nebraska and east central North Dakota are expected to improve through November 2009.
- According to the National Weather Service Weather Forecast Office in North Platte, Nebraska, Lake McConaughy is making a recovery from low lake levels. Lake McConaughy is the largest reservoir in Nebraska and is located in the western part of the state north of Ogallala, Nebraska. The lake, originally constructed for irrigation, supplies water for irrigation to over 200,000 acres of land in the southwest and south central areas of the state. Between the 1960s and 1990s, Lake McConaughy had high lake elevations with 3227 ft as the lowest elevation recorded during this time. However, recent drought lasting from 2000-2006 brought the lake to a new historic low elevation of 3197.5 feet on September 14, 2004. Over the last few years, rain and limited irrigation have improved lake levels and as of September 1, 2009 the lake had an elevation of 3229 feet. Lake levels are expected to continue to rise through winter and spring.

For more information, please go to the High Plains Regional Climate Center Home Page.

Southern Region: *(Information provided by the Southern Regional Climate Center)*

- With the exception of southern Texas, northern Arkansas, and eastern Oklahoma, most of the Southern Region averaged near-normal mean daily temperatures for the month of August. That is, for most of the Southern Region, mean daily temperatures for the month averaged within 2° F (1 °C). In northern Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma, mean daily temperatures for the month averaged approximately 2-4 ° F (1-2 °C) below normal. Conversely, mean daily temperatures were above normal in drought ridden southern Texas, with values ranging approximately 2-4 ° F (1-2 °C) above normal. Anomalously high temperatures in this region could be amplifying drought conditions, which have persisted in southern Texas for several weeks.
- August precipitation in the Southern Region was highly variable during the month of August. The driest area of the Southern Region was once again in southern Texas. In southern Texas, almost all stations reported less than 50% of normal precipitation for the month. This was also the case in west central Texas, the Oklahoma panhandle, central Louisiana, southeastern Arkansas, and northwestern Mississippi. Dry conditions were also observed throughout most of Tennessee, with the exception of the eastern quarter of the state, where precipitation totals varied between 150-200% of normal. In the remainder of Tennessee, conditions were relatively dry with most stations only reporting between 50 and 90% of normal. In central and north central Oklahoma, higher than normal precipitation values were observed, with many stations reporting between 150 and 200% of normal August rainfall. Similar conditions were

also observed in northwestern and northeastern Arkansas, and central Mississippi.

- August drought conditions in the Southern Region have not significantly changed since the end of July. One area of improvement occurred in north central Oklahoma, where anomalously high August precipitation totals have helped to eradicate moderate and severe drought conditions. Moderate drought conditions remain in southeastern Louisiana, southern Mississippi and central Texas. As was the case last month, a large portion of southern Texas (approximately 25 % of the state of Texas) remains in extreme or exceptional drought. The persistence of drought in southern Texas is mainly due to low August precipitation totals and positive August temperature anomalies.
- On the 3rd of the month, several wind reports were documented for eastern Texas. Reports indicated that strong winds resulted in many downed trees and damaged power lines. This was also the case in central Mississippi on the 7th of the month. On the 8th, a tornado touched down in New Iberia, LA. One injury was reported. According to 2theadvocate.com, several car windows were shattered and the roof on a funeral home was partially blown off. On the 12th of the month, over a dozen wind reports were filed in southern Mississippi and southeastern Louisiana. Damage included the downing of trees and power lines. Two days later, on the 14th of the month, 57 knot (105.5 km/h) winds were reported in Edinburg, TX. Strong winds near Dawn, TX were also reported. Wind speeds there ranged from 60-70 mph (96.6-112.6 km/h). A tornado touched down in Houston, TX on the 16th of the month. A brick wall was reported to be blown over and an 18 wheeler in a parking lot was also blown over. Another tornado was reported in Laredo, TX on the 22nd of the month, however; no damage or injuries were mentioned in the report. On the 23rd of August, wind damage occurred in Chouteau, OK, with reports of downed power lines, downed tree limbs, and metal sheeting blown off a roof of a building. One day later, wind damage was reported in New Iberia, LA, with damage consisting of downed trees and power lines.

For more information, please go to the Southern Regional Climate Center Home Page.

Western Region: *(Information provided by the Western Regional Climate Center)*

- Temperatures were near normal for much of the West. Only the extreme eastern portion of Montana had significantly lower than normal temperatures while pockets of the Southwest had higher than normal temperatures. Douglas, Arizona, reported their warmest August on record dating back to 1948 and Tucson recorded their 2nd warmest August. Tucson also noted a string of 29 consecutive days, starting July 10th, with minimum temperatures of 75°F (23.9°C) or higher, the longest such streak in their record, topping the previous record of 18 such days set in 2003 and tied in 2006. An odd anomaly occurred in Ely, Nevada, as they recorded their coolest August in 41 years. Surrounding areas had no such anomaly. Casper, Wyoming, recorded their 4th coolest August dating back to 1948.
- Precipitation was also near normal for the region with the notable exceptions of the southwest (dry) and portions of Idaho and Montana (wet). The lack of monsoonal moisture led Tucson to their driest August since 1976 and third driest on record dating back to 1948. Missoula, Montana, recorded 3.08 inches (78.2 mm) for their 2nd

wettest August on record while Boise, Idaho, recorded their 3rd wettest August with 1.79 inches (45.5 mm).

- On August 26th a large fire (the Station Fire) began in the Angeles National Forest just north of Los Angeles. Due to very hot and dry conditions the fire had exploded to over 105,000 acres with only 5% containment by September 1st. Two firefighters have been killed and at least 53 structures destroyed and 6,600 homes under mandatory evacuation orders.

For more information, please go to the Western Regional Climate Center Home Page.

See NCDC's Monthly Extremes web-page for weather and climate records for the month of May. For additional national, regional, and statewide data and graphics from 1895-present, for May, the last 3 months or other periods, please visit the Climate at a Glance page.

PLEASE NOTE: All of the temperature and precipitation ranks and values are based on preliminary data. The ranks will change when the final data are processed, but will not be replaced on these pages. Graphics based on final data are provided on the Climate Monitoring Products page and the Climate at a Glance page as they become available.

Questions?

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For climate data orders, please contact the National Climatic Data Center's Climate Services and Monitoring Division:

NCDC.Orders@noaa.gov

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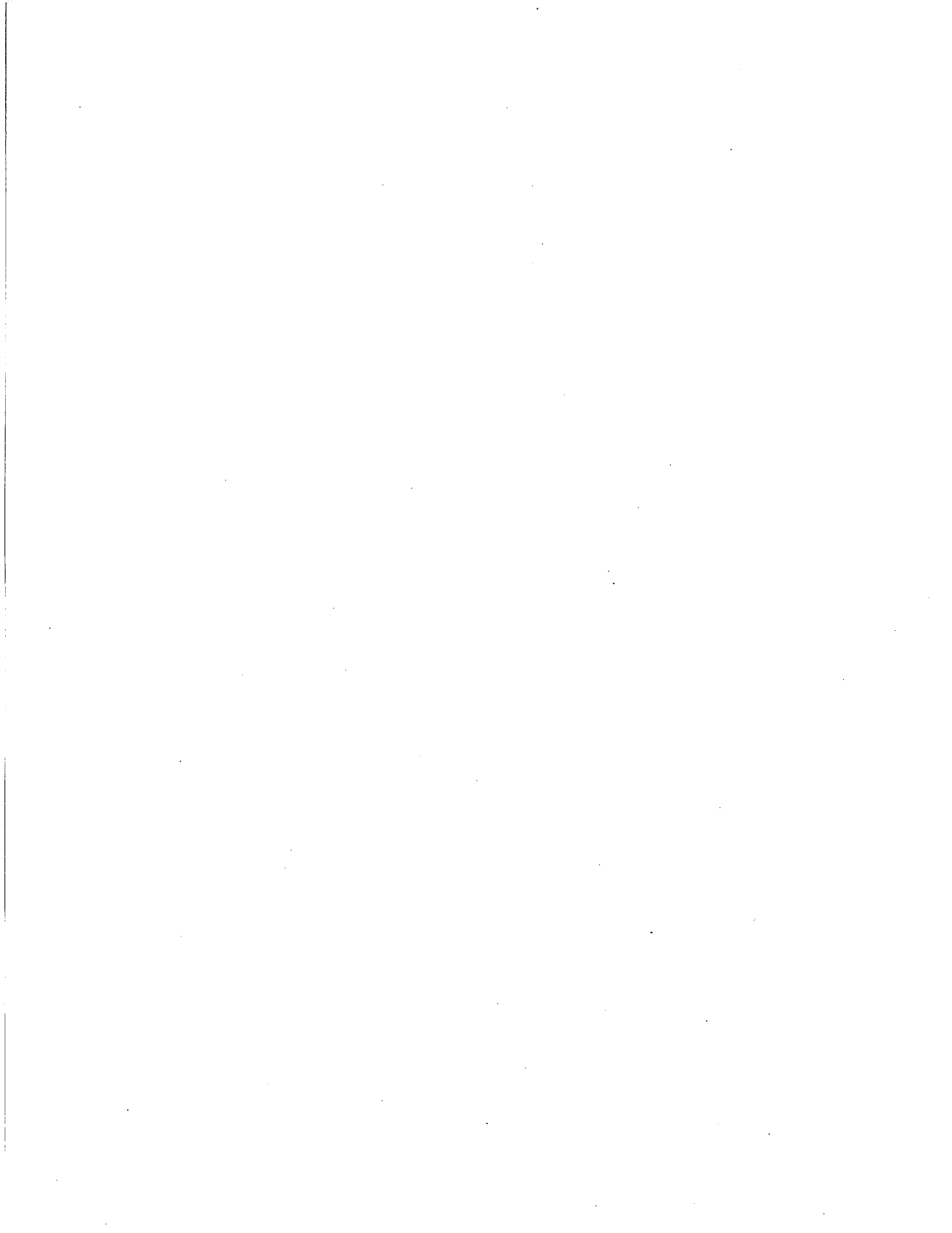
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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WSJ.com

AUGUST 25, 2009, 9:33 AM ET

Inherit the Wind: A Scopes Trial for Climate Change?

Don't tell Al Gore, but it seems the science behind climate change isn't settled to everyone's satisfaction.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce wants the Environmental Protection Agency to hold a public hearing to put "the science of climate change on trial," the Los Angeles Times reports today. And the Chamber already has another famous trial in mind:

Chamber officials say it would be "the Scopes monkey trial of the 21st century" — complete with witnesses, cross-examinations and a judge who would rule, essentially, on whether humans are warming the planet to dangerous effect. "It would be evolution versus creationism," said William Kovacs, the chamber's senior vice president for environment, technology and regulatory affairs.



Ever since the EPA determined this spring that global warming was man-made and posed health risks for Americans, the Chamber has been itching for a public hearing to dispute the scientific basis of that now-famous "endangerment finding." The Chamber crystallized its gripes this summer:

Coming soon to a theater near you?
(AP)

It turns out that when EPA issued its finding about the impact of greenhouse gases, it didn't tell the whole story. When the U.S. Chamber examined the key scientific data used to make the finding—specifically, the link between greenhouse gas emissions from new cars and so-called public endangerment—it found that EPA played fast and loose with the facts. EPA routinely ignored relevant, credible scientific information that contradicted its findings, including information generated by the agency's own staff. Cherry-picking only the evidence that bolsters your claim is the opposite of scientific integrity, transparency, and openness.

UPDATE: The full Chamber of Commerce petition is now available. And Mr. Kovacs added in a statement: "Let me be clear, we are not debating the science behind global warming," Kovacs said. "We are unconvinced that EPA has demonstrated, as a matter of law, that greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles in the U.S. endanger public health or welfare."

The prospect of a replay of the 1925 "Scopes Monkey Trial," which hinged around a Tennessee school teacher who purposely tested state law by teaching evolution in the classroom, would be more great theater for a climate debate already heavily theatrical. Who would reprise the roles of the two titanic lawyers—William Jennings Bryant and Clarence Darrow—whose duel spawned a play and four movies? More to the point, who would play them in the movie version these days?

But the lessons of the Scopes trial shouldn't necessarily cheer environmentalists, who apparently told the L.A. Times that "the scientists won in the end."

They didn't—John Scopes was found guilty of violating state law by teaching evolution, and his conviction was upheld on appeal. His salvation came on a legal technicality hinging on the dollar amount of the fine he was given, after he'd already abandoned the classroom. In the long run, of course, scientists did win, after Tennessee changed its laws and the U.S. Supreme Court struck down similar anti-evolution laws.

Either way, it seems the EPA doesn't want to go there, telling the L.A. Times the proposed hearing is a "waste of time."

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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AUGUST 25, 2009, 4:14 PM ET

Climate Debate: IPCC Head Pachauri Joins the 350 Club

The rhetorical battle, if nothing else, is heating up in the debate over how to stem climate change. Rajendra Pachauri, the head of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, has unofficially come out in favor of really ambitious targets for greenhouse gases—much more ambitious than those of the scientific group he heads.



IPCC head Rajendra Pachauri, the latest member of the 350 club (AP)

Mr. Pachauri told AFP he supports the idea of limiting atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide to 350 parts per million. The IPCC in 2007 said 450 parts per million was the really scary threshold; neither the IPCC nor Mr. Pachauri can make policy recommendations.

"But as a human being I am fully supportive of that goal. What is happening, and what is likely to happen, convinces me that the world must be really ambitious and very determined at moving toward a 350 target," he told AFP in an interview.

Does it matter at all? Mr. Pachauri isn't the first big name to advocate such limits on atmospheric concentrations (which are, by the way, below current levels).

Bill McKibben founded the group 350.org with precisely that goal in mind. NASA's James Hansen keeps getting himself arrested hollering that the world doesn't have a prayer unless it rolls back concentrations to 350 parts per million, starting right now.

But despite Dr. Hansen's stature in scientific circles, his reputation for influencing actual policy is a little spottier, as Elizabeth Kolbert recently noted in the *New Yorker* (sub reqd.)

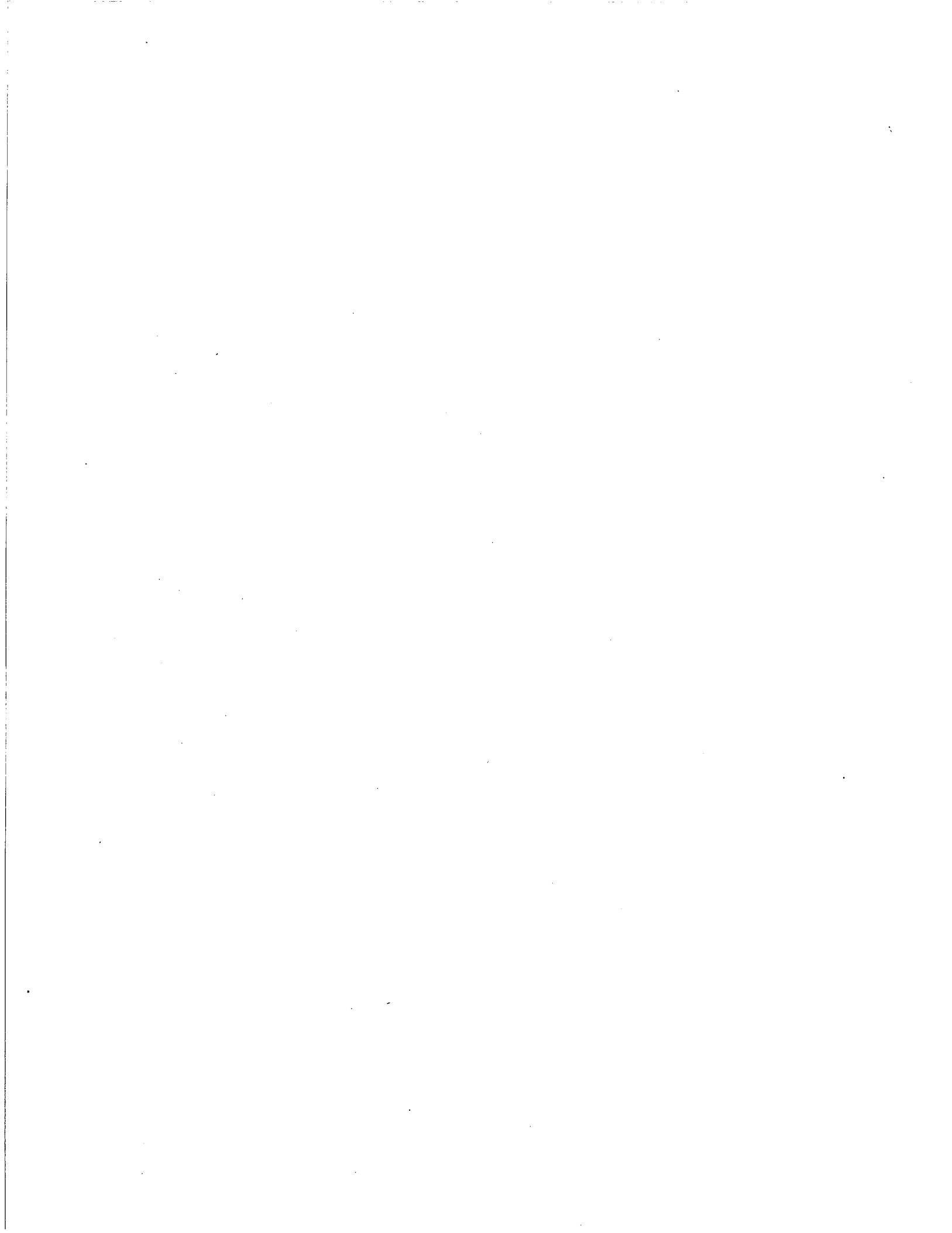
And whether it's the current battle in the U.S. Senate or the prologue to December's climate summit in Copenhagen, climate politics is most decidedly a Bismarckian art of the possible. Getting rich countries to agree on steep emissions cuts necessary to meet that target is tough enough; convincing developing countries which are increasingly digging in their heels looks next to impossible.

Which is why, as Michael Levi argued in the latest issue of *Foreign Policy* (sub reqd.), the chances of success in Copenhagen look "vanishingly small." A better approach, he says, would be to treat climate talks like trade talks—an ongoing round of negotiations that may last for years but which can address all the minutiae, such as figuring out who's emitting how much of what in the first place. And which, by the way, have some sort of enforcement for countries that ditch their obligations.


In the meantime, political hot air about long-term targets is just that. More progress could be made with modest, national goals in areas like energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean coal. "Actual emissions cuts happen because of policies, not promises, and the simple fact that governments could directly control these policies would increase the likelihood of success," Mr. Levi writes.

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AUGUST 26, 2009, 9:19 AM ET

Enviros to Boxer: Toughen Up the Climate Bill!

The energy and climate legislation in the Senate keeps drawing fire from both sides—making its chances of passing this year look even dimmer.

The latest salvo comes from environmentalists urging Sen. Barbara Boxer to stiffen up the Senate's version of the climate bill, even as legislators are under pressure from business and agricultural groups to make the bill weaker than the version the House passed in June.

Today, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Clean Air Watch and more than 300 other groups (from Jewish Vegetarians of North America to Ursulines of Tildonk for Justice and Peace) sent a letter to the chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

The message? The Senate better go further than the House did: "[A] bill with inadequate targets, loophole-ridden mechanisms, rollbacks of our flagship environmental laws, and inadequate financing for developing countries to address climate change will move us in the wrong direction."

That means joining the so-called "350 club," which refers to a growing movement to rollback atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide to 350 parts per million; it's at about 387 ppm today.

And that leads directly to one of the environmentalists' biggest gripes: The extensive use of "carbon offsets" in the House bill. That allows companies to "cut" greenhouse-gas emissions by underwriting projects, from wind farms to cleaner landfills, in other parts of the world.

"A top priority must be to eliminate or greatly limit and restrict offsets," the letter reads. That's because many people are skeptical that carbon offsets actually do much to reduce emissions around the world.

The problem is that offsets are seen as crucial to making any climate bill economically affordable. That's because offsets are a cheaper way to cut emissions than overhauling coal plants, renewing the U.S. auto fleet, or many other measures that would help reduce emissions.

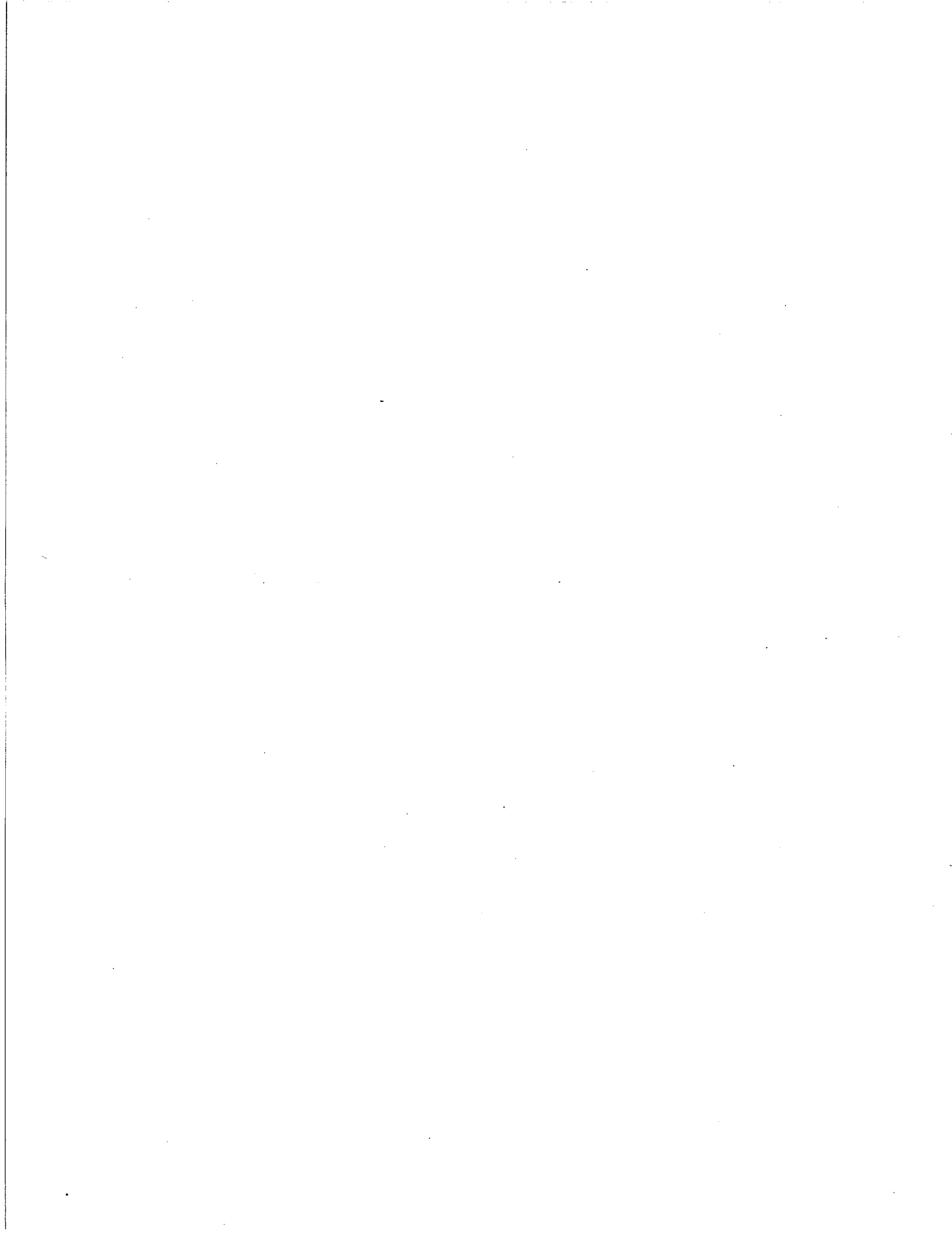
The Congressional Budget Office found this month that U.S. climate legislation with offsets would be 60% cheaper in 2030 than identical legislation without offsets.

So far, most of the handicapping of the Senate's chances of passing climate legislation this year has revolved around how to bring on board fence-sitting legislators worried about the economic impacts of the bill.

Further calls to make the program even more stringent—and potentially even more expensive—might please some environmentalists, but won't make the political calculus any easier.

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AUGUST 27, 2009, 1:41 PM ET

Clean Cities: DOE Boosts Nat-Gas Vehicles With \$300 Million

These really aren't happy days for biofuels.

As The Wall Street Journal reported today, the entire sector—from corn ethanol to next-generation biofuels—has been poleaxed by everything from the credit crunch to its own inability to turn promises into reality. Now the Department of Energy seems to be adding insult to injury.

Yesterday, the DOE unveiled the "Clean Cities Grants," a \$300 million slice of the stimulus package meant to spur development of cleaner, alternative transport systems for cities across the country.

The big winner? Natural gas. The big losers? Biofuel and biodiesel. The program dished out roughly two dozen grants meant to build 542 refueling locations across the country and put more than 9,000 alternative-fuel vehicles on the road.

Only a fraction of those refueling stations will be for ethanol or biodiesel; the majority are for compressed natural gas, liquid natural gas, or propane. One project, for instance, will help finance a 700-mile LNG corridor from California to Utah "along one of the nation's most heavily traveled truck routes." T. Boone Pickens must be smiling today.

"Maybe it's not a forever solution, but the only thing that's ready to go today is natural gas," says David Woodburn, senior research analyst at ThinkEquity in Chicago, who covers alternative fuels. The fact that the money comes from the stimulus package, he says, explains in part natural gas' field day: As attractive as electric batteries and next-generation biofuels may be, they are still tomorrow's solutions (if even then).

A year after Mr. Pickens unveiled his eponymous plan to use natural gas for transport and lessen dependence on foreign oil, the stars seem to be aligning. That's partly because natural gas appeals to so many different constituencies: The energy-security crowd, environmentalists, natural-gas companies desperately looking for new markets to unload a domestic glut, and so on.

Congress has legislation that would boost federal tax credits for the purchase of natural-gas fueled vehicles. Influential politicians and think tanks are increasingly warming up to natural gas as a low-carbon alternative to fossil fuels.

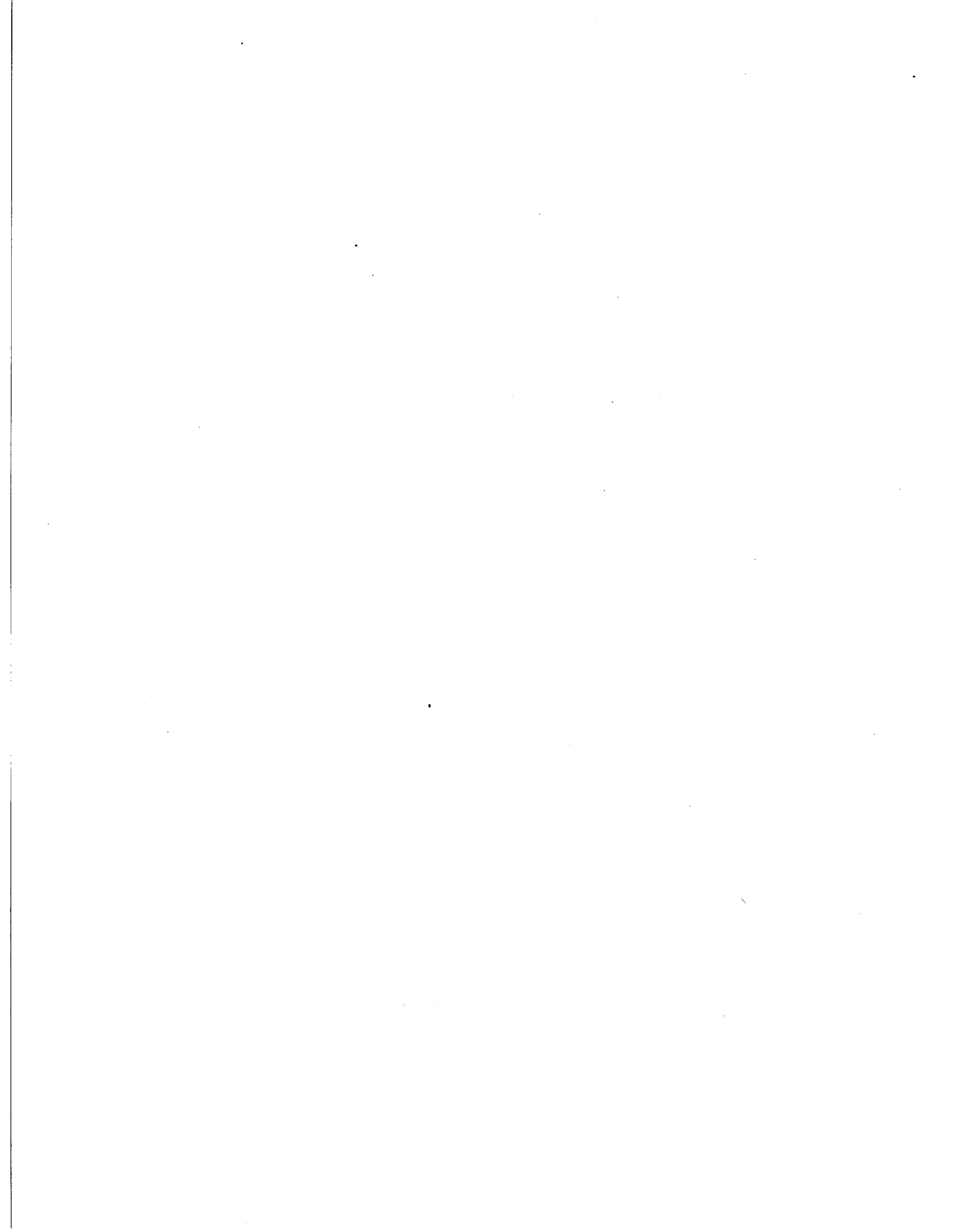
Still, the "Clean Cities" program really is just the tiniest start: The DOE estimates it will save 38 million gallons of gasoline a year. That's 0.027% of U.S. annual consumption.

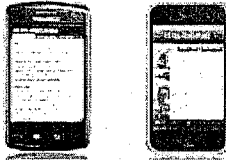


More where that came from (AP)

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AUGUST 28, 2009, 9:28 AM ET

Obama Energy Plans Have Broad Support—Up to a Point

There are some interesting nuggets about the energy debate in the Washington Post-ABC News poll released today.

In a nutshell: Americans seem to broadly support what they know of Congress' and the administration's energy policy, with 57% supporting the plans and 29% opposed. Though folks that are opposed are adamant: Almost 20% of prospective voters are "strongly opposed" to the energy plans being bandied about.

However, fears about the economic impact of the cap-and-trade plan seem not to have resonated with the public. A slim majority (52%) still supports capping greenhouse-gas emissions. People aren't freaking out about job losses, either: Some 36% figure the new energy policy will create jobs, 42% figure it won't matter, and only 16% figure it will kill jobs.



Little margin for error (AP)

One potential warning sign for the administration: Public support for cap-and-trade is down since last summer (before there actually was a cap-and-trade plan) when it enjoyed 59% support.

One key lesson from the poll: The cap-and-trade program has to be relatively painless to win support from the average Joe. That is, if electric bills rise just \$10 a month, support for cap-and-trade rises to 58%. If electric bills rise \$25 a month, support collapses to 39%. In other words, the cost of a suitcase of Budweiser could make or break the country's most ambitious environmental program.

Still, Republicans can take heart from Americans' feelings about energy: They want it all. There's majority support for every conceivable form of energy: nuclear (52%); renewables (91%); oil and gas (64%); coal (52%); and electric cars (82%).

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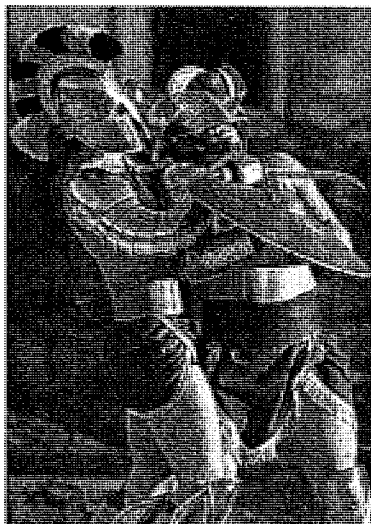
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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AUGUST 31, 2009, 11:55 AM ET

Fuel Fight: The Battle over Low-Carbon Fuel Standards

How fierce is the energy debate getting? Some groups are launching ad campaigns against new energy rules that aren't even part of the climate package sitting on the Hill.



Preparing for September (AP)

The Consumer Energy Alliance—made up of more than 100 groups including Exxon, BP, ConocoPhillips, Peabody, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—today kicks off an ad campaign in a handful of states “to educate American consumers on economic and national security impacts associated with a national Low-Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS).”

Low-carbon fuel standards would set new environmental rules for transportation fuel, by penalizing dirtier fuels—such as Canadian oil sands—in a bid to clean up the overall environmental picture of U.S. transportation.

The problem is, the Waxman-Markey bill that passed the House in June doesn't include a low-carbon fuel provision; the draft version this spring did, but it was completely cut out during the summertime horse-trading in the House. And Waxman-Markey is considered the starting point for even greater compromises as the Senate tackles energy and climate legislation next month.

Sure, there are standalone low-carbon fuel bills in both the House and Senate, but neither has budged in their respective committees. And the Obama administration's recent decision to greenlight new pipelines to carry crude from Canadian oil sands suggests that energy security outweighs many environmental considerations.

That's not stopping the CEA, which warns that the new rules, “if enacted,” would “threaten American jobs, increase prices at the pump, and expand U.S. dependence on energy imports from unstable foreign regimes.”

The argument is that the low-carbon fuel rules would disproportionately hit Canadian oil imports, since most Canadian crude comes from oil sands which have a nastier environmental footprint than traditional crude. By blacklisting one of the key suppliers to the U.S., the new standard would force the U.S. to pay even more for fuel from less-friendly countries.

Plenty of folks, from the Congressional Research Service to independent consultants, agree that low-carbon rules would likely lead to more expensive fuel, simply because there'd be less “clean” oil to choose from.

In its ad campaign—initially targeted at Tennessee, Montana, and the Dakotas—the CEA says “Congress is set to consider” new rules that would “be disastrous.” Gasoline prices, the ads say, “would increase by at least 60 cents a gallon.”

Now that both sides in the energy and climate debate are openly cribbing from the lessons of the health-care scrum, expect temperatures to keep rising in September.

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