



Global Warming Campaign American Clean Energy and Security Act

In June 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES, HR 2454) – a ground-breaking energy plan that will repower America with clean energy, cut our dangerous dependence on oil, and reduce global warming pollution.

The central component of the ACES Act is a program that will reduce global warming pollution by 83 percent below 2005 levels by 2050. In addition, the bill includes several forward-thinking policies that will drive investments in clean and renewable energy, ensure that we are using energy more efficiently, and reduce our dependence on dirty fossil fuels like oil and coal – all policies that help reduce global warming pollution.

The bill also includes critically important provisions that will provide funding to protect our natural resources and help birds and wildlife adapt to a changing climate.

By addressing the issues of climate change and energy independence, we can protect our communities and the environment, revitalize our faltering economy, create millions of new jobs, and build the clean energy economy of the future. The ACES Act is a major step toward achieving such a vision.

Highlights of the ACES Act

REDUCES GLOBAL WARMING POLLUTION

The ACES Act requires power plants, oil companies, and other polluting industries to clean up and reduce global warming pollution.

- It will reduce U.S. emissions by 17 percent below 2005 levels by 2020, 42 percent by 2030, and 83 percent by 2050.
- A separate program provides funding for international efforts to reduce tropical deforestation, with a goal of cutting emissions an additional 10 percent by 2020.

ACES requires the EPA to review the latest global warming science and the National Academy of

Sciences (NAS) to review technical advances to ensure that the most up-to-date science and technology informs policymakers. The EPA and NAS must make recommendations to the Administration based on their findings. The EPA is given the authority to adjust regulations if needed; if the science indicates greater reductions are needed, the President must propose legislative changes to Congress.

SAFEGUARDS NATURAL RESOURCES FROM GLOBAL WARMING

The ACES Act provides critically important funding to help birds, wildlife and natural resources adapt and respond to the enormous threats posed by global warming.

- It provides an average of \$1.7 billion over the first 20 years of the effort for a variety of programs at the national, state, and local level for wildlife adaptation and safeguarding natural resources.
- Longstanding, proven programs for wildlife conservation, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, National Wildlife Refuge System, and Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, would receive funding.

BOOSTS ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY

The ACES Act includes several provisions aimed at saving more energy through energy efficiency and increasing our use of renewable energy.

- It establishes strong minimum targets for building codes in new residential and commercial building, with the goal of improving efficiency by 30 to 50 percent.
- It creates incentives for retrofits of existing buildings.
- It sets up efficiency programs that will reduce oil consumption in homes and business.
- It establishes aggressive standards for lighting and appliances; and
- Creates standards that promote greater efficiency in the industrial sector.

The bill establishes a combined national renewable electricity and energy efficiency standard of 20 percent by 2020. At least one quarter of the requirement can be met through energy efficiency improvements. States also have the ability to raise the efficiency portion to two-fifths of the standard.

The ACES Act provides states with billions of dollars of new funding from the sale of pollution allowances on an annual basis to be used to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy in every part of the nation and in all communities.

REDUCES DEPENDENCE ON OIL WITH CLEAN TRANSPORTATION

The ACES Act includes several important programs to save oil.

- It promotes the next generation of clean and efficient vehicles.
- Supports the development of smarter transportation plans.
- Reduces global warming pollution from heavy trucks, construction equipment, trains, and airplanes.

PROTECTS CONSUMERS

The ACES Act delivers clean energy that is affordable and helps protect consumers across all income groups.

- 15 percent of the revenues gained from selling pollution allowances are dedicated to protecting low-income consumers.
- Electric and natural gas distribution companies are required to utilize distributed allowances in a manner that benefits their customers.
- In the latter years of the program, more revenues are provided for consumer rebates as the free allocation of pollution allowances is phased out.

Audubon's Priorities for Improvement

The American Clean Energy and Security Act is landmark legislation that will put our country on a clear path to a clean energy economy. However, there are key provisions within the bill that should be improved. As the bill moves forward in the Senate, Audubon will be working to strengthen the bill as follows:

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1. ESTABLISH A STRONGER 2020 EMISSIONS REDUCTION TARGET

While the long-term emissions target for the cap and trade program is strong, the 2020 target should be more stringent. We can and must aim to achieve at least a 20 percent reduction by 2020.

2. CLEAN UP THE DIRTIEST SOURCES OF POLLUTION

Although the ACES Act establishes a strong program to reduce global warming pollution and ensure that new power plants pollute less, the bill eliminates the ability of the EPA to clean up old dirty power plants and other existing facilities. The bill should allow the EPA to require the oldest, dirtiest, and most polluting sources to reduce emissions.

3. IMPROVE THE RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARD

While the ACES Act seeks to establish a national standard for expanding renewable electricity and achieving greater energy efficiency gains, the overall targets for the standard fall short. The standard also allows non-renewable sources of energy to dampen the overall targets. The renewable electricity portion of the standard should be strengthened and non-renewable sources should be excluded. In addition, a combined standard should not be a substitute for a stand-alone energy efficiency standard.

4. EXPAND INVESTMENTS IN EFFICIENCY, CLEAN ENERGY, GREEN JOBS, AND WILDLIFE ADAPTATION

Greater investments should be made in delivering greater energy efficiency gains and expanding renewable energy, creating green jobs and providing the right training, achieving more emissions reductions from the transportation sector, and protecting natural resources, birds and wildlife.

5. PROMOTE CLEAN AND SUSTAINABLE BIO-ENERGY

The ACES Act weakens current law by blocking the EPA from conducting a full lifecycle accounting of the carbon emissions from producing and using biofuels – including impacts such as international deforestation. At the same time, the bill removes all protections for the production of biomass on private lands. The bill should account for all emissions created in the production of biomass and, at the same time, provide protection for sensitive public and private lands.