

# THE REALITY OF U.S. CLIMATE ACTION: NON-FEDERAL LEADERSHIP IS DELIVERING AMBITION AND ACTION

AMERICA'S  
PLEDGE

BEYOND  
CARBON



UNITED STATES  
CLIMATE ALLIANCE

WE ARE  
STILL IN

**A wave of U.S. climate leadership is answering the global call to action to combat the climate crisis.** Cities, states, and communities across the U.S. are executing bold, ambitious plans to reduce national emissions, even in the absence of federal leadership. This rapidly expanding coalition is showing the world that the transition toward a transformed, clean economy generates opportunities and extensive benefits for economies, communities, and ecosystems.

**U.S. states, cities, tribes, businesses, communities of faith, universities, and others are already making a difference in U.S. emissions — and are on track to deliver even more.**

U.S. emissions declined in recent years in part due to state, city, and business actions. While 2018 saw an uptick in total U.S. GHG emissions due to a combination of factors, steps taken by actors outside the federal government are generating growing momentum toward aggregate emission reductions. These steps, whether individually small or large, are helping the U.S. advance towards its targets under the Paris Agreement.



**Fulfilling America's Pledge**, published in September 2018, found that commitments by U.S. non-federal leaders were on track to deliver a full two-thirds of the U.S. 2025 target agreed to under the Paris Agreement. Instead of a roughly 3% increase from current emissions levels without action, commitments were estimated to deliver well over a 17% reduction in 2025 compared to 2005. In the year since the analysis was released, states, cities, and businesses have further accelerated implementation and committed to even more action.

**Cities, states, and businesses are America's climate innovators, deploying bottom-up solutions for the global climate crisis and working with legislatures, city councils, and corporate boards to set new, science-based commitments and accelerate our clean-energy economy transition.**

- The **U.S. Climate Alliance**, which represents states and territories whose governors have committed to ambitious climate action, grew from 17 to 25 members in just one year.
- **Climate Mayors** has grown to 430 member cities - all of whom have committed to taking meaningful action on climate - across 48 states since its founding in 2014.
- The **We Are Still In** coalition, which includes members of all action groups from municipalities to businesses to other communities, now numbers over 3,800 compared to 1,200 at launch in 2017.
- We Are Still In, U.S. Climate Alliance members, and other U.S. coalitions committed to the Paris Agreement **now represent nearly 70% of U.S. GDP and nearly 65% of the U.S. population.** Were they a country, this group would constitute the world's third largest economy.

**Last September, the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco brought together over 5,000 leaders from around the world to showcase climate action taking place at the subnational level by states, cities, civil society, businesses, and investors. The Summit mobilized over 500 new commitments to climate action. Since the Summit and the release of the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, significant progress has been made.**



## ECONOMY-WIDE COMMITMENTS ARE ON THE RISE.

- **Nine states adopted new GHG reduction targets** in the last year: California, Colorado, Maine, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. California and New York joined Hawai'i in adopting a statewide carbon neutrality goal by or before 2050. Montana tasked its newly-created Climate Council with setting a carbon neutrality goal.
- **Several U.S. cities committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80-100% by 2050** including Boulder, Minneapolis, Seattle and Washington, D.C.
- In the last year, **61 U.S. businesses with a market capitalization of over \$1.7 trillion and over 1.5 million employees have made long-term commitments** on the We Mean Business Take Action platform, including commitments to set a Science Based Target and engage in responsible climate policy.
- The **Beyond Carbon initiative committed \$500 million** to supporting transformational climate policies in U.S. cities, states, and regions, to ensure the country is already on the path to a 100% clean energy economy before the next president takes office.



## STATES, CITIES AND BUSINESSES ARE MOVING EN MASSE TO 100% CLEAN ENERGY.

- **In 2019, New Mexico, Nevada, Washington, Maine, New York, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico joined Hawai'i and California in enacting 100% clean energy legislation.** Together these states represent 16% of the nation's electricity demand, more than doubling the share from a year ago.
- **Similar commitments have been made by governors in five more states**, which if enacted, would bring nearly 25% of the nation's total electricity demand committed to 100% clean energy.
- So far in 2019, **more than 30 additional cities have adopted 100% clean energy targets**, bringing the national total to 133 (and counting), representing a combined population of over 19 million, including the City of Los Angeles representing the largest municipal utility in the country.
- **Cities and businesses are increasingly pursuing off-site renewable deals.** For example, Albuquerque added 25MW of new solar and Philadelphia is finalizing 70MW of solar. In the last year, businesses brought over 1765MW of utility-scale offsite renewables online.
- **Nearly 50 utilities nationwide, serving more than 154 million customers, have adopted formal clean energy or emissions reduction goals**, 12 of which are 100% decarbonization goals.
- **62 companies with American operations, including many Fortune 500 companies, have committed to 100% clean energy.** Apple Inc., Johnson & Johnson, Bank of America, Starbucks, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., and other companies committing to the RE100 pledge have a market capitalization of over \$7.8 trillion.



## NON-FEDERAL ACTORS ARE DRIVING DOWN TRANSPORTATION EMISSIONS—AND SHIFTING TO ELECTRIC.

- **24 governors and 430 Climate Mayors**, representing over half of national vehicle sales, **committed to stand together** in calling for one strong, national clean car standard and support preserving state authority to protect their residents from vehicle pollution. They agreed to continue to pursue additional concrete actions and defend against any threats.
- **Colorado became the 11th state committed to a zero-emissions vehicle (ZEV) standard**, which includes a mandate to increase statewide sales of battery electric or fuel cell vehicles. Together, these states comprise 30% of annual vehicle sales.
- U.S. Climate Alliance states are **building out electric vehicle charging infrastructure and providing financial and non-financial incentives to consumers and dealers.** These states are leading by example through state fleet transition programs and electric vehicle deployment.
- **Ten members of the Transportation and Climate Initiative** (Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington, D.C.) **announced that they are developing a new regional policy proposal to cap and reduce emissions from the transportation sector.**
- **157 cities, counties and other public entities are now part of the Climate Mayors Electric Vehicle Purchasing Collaborative** and have committed to purchasing over 2300 EVs, leveraging the purchasing power of major cities across the U.S. to reduce costs and eliminate barriers to public fleet electrification.



## SHORT-LIVED CLIMATE SUPER-POLLUTANTS GOT SERIOUS ATTENTION.

- **Washington and Vermont passed legislation that will serve as backstops for federal rollbacks and drive a phasing out of hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) emissions** — which are thousands of times more potent and harmful to our health and environment than CO2. New York, Maryland, Connecticut, and Delaware announced their intention to adopt similar rules, signaling to American manufacturers that greater demand for more climate-friendly alternatives is fast approaching.
- **New Mexico will join Colorado, Pennsylvania, and California in developing regulations that will reduce methane emissions and prevent waste from oil and gas sources;** Virginia is implementing a regulatory process for gas infrastructure and landfills to limit statewide methane emissions.



## NEW BUILDING EFFICIENCY POLICIES SAVED AMERICAN FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES ON ENERGY COSTS.

- **Washington established the nation's first state-level energy performance standard for large commercial buildings** and provided \$75 million in incentives for buildings to retrofit for efficiency under its landmark 2019 Clean Buildings Act.
- **Berkeley, California became the first U.S. city to prohibit the use of gas in new low-rise buildings** to reduce air pollution and save consumers money. Other cities are following suit.
- **Washington, D.C. passed the Clean Energy D.C. Act**, which established a Building Energy Performance Standard requiring existing buildings to reach minimum levels of energy efficiency. The Standard is expected to cut the District's emissions by almost 1 million tons annually, and add to the existing 12,000 local efficiency jobs.
- **Colorado, Hawaii, Washington, and Nevada adopted appliance efficiency standards that will save consumers more than \$3 billion by 2035;** benefits that have lawmakers in New York, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and Washington, D.C. discussing efficiency standards as well.



## STATES AND OTHERS ARE LAUNCHING PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT JOB QUALITY AND WORKFORCE TRAINING

- **States and more are recognizing that a truly sustainable economy also requires investment in high-quality, family-supporting jobs across the many industries involved in a low carbon economy.**
- **California is adopting a statewide climate invests that prioritize jobs quality**, and investing \$35M a year in a High Road Training Partnership initiative that supports the creation of quality jobs and better, more equitable access to them across climate-impacted industries.
- Recent legislation in Colorado created a **Just Transition Office, tasked with aligning and delivering targeted programming and funding to communities and workers impacted by a transition away from coal-fired electricity**, in addition to disproportionately impacted communities who have borne the costs of pollution.

**Success from these coalitions demonstrates that diversified climate leadership is thriving, expanding, and leading towards a 1.5 degree pathway—in the U.S. and around the world.** The path to success in global efforts to reach a 1.5 pathway depends on all actors—not just national governments—unleashing their highest ambition to achieve these goals.

**The work being done in the United States can also serve as a roadmap for how similar success can be built in other countries—with similar approaches underway in Japan, Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, and more. This cross-sectoral, collaborative, and international approach is essential to advancing national low-carbon trajectories and addressing a crisis that is impacting the entire global community.**

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