munities, however. For instance, workers in the coal mining and fossil fuel industries will see their sectors become less competitive in the transition to a low-carbon economy, and workers could lose their jobs. Communities that depend on these industries will have to diversify their economies. The costs and benefits will not be spread evenly around the United States. Individuals and communities will need transition assistance as they adapt to these changes.

California – which generates only 21 percent of its electricity from coal – would not be as heavily affected by strategies to reduce coal consumption as Ohio, which draws 86 percent of its electricity from coal. States in the Midwest could have more difficulty switching to low-carbon forms of energy than would many coastal states.

Some assert that implementing these dramatic changes in how the country produces and uses energy will be difficult for people and communities. In the middle of a recession, policymakers might argue that reviving the economy and creating jobs is so urgent that a cleaner, healthier, and safer environment must wait. In fact, creating a healthy, sustainable economy and curbing global warming are both urgent and interdependent goals. People negatively affected can be assisted in the transition to a sustainable society.

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What can we do to address climate change?

1. **Let Congress know that the epa must continue to be empowered to establish and enforce standards on greenhouse gas emissions.**
2. **Tell Congress to establish aggressive standards for cutting greenhouse gas emissions.**
3. **Urge Congress to modify the proposed "Cap and Trade" to "Cap without Trade" or a Carbon Tax.**
4. **Urge Congress to create funding that would create millions of green jobs in the coming decades.**

1. Let Congress know that the EPA must continue to be empowered to establish and enforce standards on greenhouse gas emissions.

The Supreme Court recently mandated that the EPA had the responsibility to regulate standards on greenhouse gas emissions. Since then the EPA established, through overwhelming scientific data, that greenhouse gases endanger public health and welfare and in recent weeks the EPA announced plans to go after big polluters of these greenhouse gases.

Now there are some in Congress that want to restrict the EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. For example, in the energy/climate bill approved by the House last year it takes away from the EPA the power to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, in the Senate a bill has been recently introduced by Senator to block the EPA from enforcing and regulating greenhouse gas emissions.

The EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson said that enactment of the bill would also "pull the plug" on EPA's proposed greenhouse gas emissions standards for automobiles. Administrator Jackson has reiterated the path she plans to take, mandated by the laws that Congress has passed said. "The path includes the national cars program agreed to with automakers this past spring, as well as a nationwide reporting system that allows us to design a comprehensive and reasonable approach to curbing greenhouse gas emissions."

The EPA must continue to be empowered to establish and enforce regulations on greenhouse gas emissions. Tell Congress that under no circumstances should the EPA be stripped of this responsibility. You should also let President Obama know that you strongly support his decision to have the EPA regulate carbon dioxide emissions and that he must veto any legislation that comes to his desk that would strip them of their authority to do so.

2. Tell Congress to establish aggressive standards for cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

If we can take away one lesson from Copenhagen it is that the United States must lead the world in addressing greenhouse emissions, but we must do so by example. For example, the minimum global standard that scientists have established to avoid major ecological collapse is to not allow global temperatures to increase more than 2 degrees Celsius by 2020.. Even this standard would result in wide spread drought in Africa.

To achieve this minimum goal the United States and other developed countries must reduce emissions by 40% by 2020. However, the United States presently has only committed to a 7% reduction in emissions by 2020. The UN's analysis concluded that the earth is now on a post Copenhagen track for a 3.2 degree global temperature rise by that date. If we continue on this track we are sure to face a major ecological collapse: polar caps melt, the Amazon and other forests break down, and hundreds of coastal cities like Copenhagen go under water, all of which will lead to hundreds of millions of refuges.

3.Urge Congress to modify the proposed Cap and Trade to a Cap and Dividend System

As U.S. energy/climate legislation creeps forward, Senators Cantwell and Collins have recently introduced a second framework to choose from. This is a simple, transparent Cap-and-Dividend System to be included in this legislation. We strongly recommend this approach rather than the Cap and Trade System that has been introduced previously by Senators Kerry, Lieberman and Graham for the following reasons:

- The Cantwell-Collins Cap and Dividend System is easier to understand and would be far simpler to administer. (There system is less than 50 pages long compared to about 1,500 pages for the Kerry-Lieberman-Graham system)
- The Cantwell-Collins Cap and Dividend System would auction all carbon permits and avoid giveaways, while the Kerry-Lieberman-Graham Cap and Trade System would hand out free up to 85% of the initial carbon permits to utilities and other entities. In addition it would create a worldwide trading system for carbon offsets. (An offset is an assertion by private parties, often in foreign lands, that they would sequester or avoid emitting a quantity of carbon dioxide that otherwise would end up in the atmosphere. Such claims are conjectural at best and potentially fraudulent at worst). The inclusion of carbon offsets would seriously weaken a carbon cap by allowing polluters to continue polluting despite the cap- just pay someone, somewhere, not to cut down trees, and you can continue to go on polluting.
- The Cantwell-Collins Cap and Dividend System has greater transparency. Its permit auctions are competitive and the public can readily see where all the revenue goes: 75% to everyone equally and 25% to climate related programs. The Kerry-Lieberman-Graham Cap and Trade System also returns money to the customers but exactly how they would do this is not clear. In addition all of the monitoring of this customer cash returns program is left to the 50 states to monitor and enforce.

There are a number of other advantages to the Cantwell-Collins Cap and Dividend System but these are the primary ones. We are encouraging our two Senators Durbin and Burris to become co-sponsors of the Cantwell-Collins System and aggressively work for its inclusion in the pending energy/climate legislation.
Up until now President Obama has not come down favoring one over the other of these approaches. However, the Cantwell-Collins System is essentially the policy Obama campaigned on – it auctions 100% of pollution permits and protects middle class families by returning higher carbon prices directly to them.

4. Urge Congress to create funding that would create millions of green jobs in the coming decades.

Most groups that track green jobs agree that millions more people in the United States will soon be employed in green jobs. How many million and how soon depend on which people you ask and how they define a green job.

A study produced for the American Solar Energy Society estimates that, in 2006, 8.5 million people were already employed directly or indirectly by the renewable energy and energy efficiency industries. The society estimates that, by 2030, 40 million workers in the United States (1 of every 4) could have a job thanks to these industries.

In October 2008 the U.S. Conference of Mayors used different criteria to estimate that the U.S. economy already generates more than 750,000 jobs as a direct result of green industries and that an emphasis on green energy could increase that number to more than 4.2 million in the next 30 years.

Another study, by the Center for American Progress, found that $100 billion in clean energy investment would create nearly four times more jobs than spending the same amount of money in the oil industry.

What is a green job?

The exact definition varies depending on whom you ask, but, broadly, a green job is employment that contributes to preserving or restoring environmental quality and avoiding future damage to the Earth's ecosystems.
Many green jobs are found in the energy industry. These jobs involve either producing renewable energy or improving the energy efficiency of existing systems.

Workers in this sector include those who produce systems that harness renewable energy sources (such as wind turbines and photovoltaic panels), who manufacture efficient appliances, and who install home insulation.

Engineering, legal, research, and consulting jobs currently dominate the green economy. In the short term, however, the biggest growth in green jobs may come in construction, architecture, weatherproofing, and other industries that increase the energy efficiency of existing buildings and industrial production lines.

Will green jobs be available for all workers or only for the highly skilled?

The jobs that currently dominate the green economy require advanced degrees and training, green jobs span a wide array of skills, educational backgrounds, and occupational profiles, according to a study by the U.N. Environmental Program.

For example, a wind turbine manufacturing company requires employees from a number of different occupations and with varying skill sets, such as machinists, assemblers, engineers, electricians, welders, managers, mechanics, inspectors, and accountants. Installing these technologies would employ many construction workers. Retrofitting existing homes to increase energy efficiency would employ auditors, carpenters, plumbers, and electricians to update heating and cooling, improve insulation, and install energy-saving meters and devices.

Part of the government's investment in green jobs should include training to make sure a wide range of workers can become qualified to do them. For example, the city of Santa Fe, NM, created the Youth works program to train young people in retrofitting low-income housing by installing solar hot water heating systems and other green technologies.

Most studies conclude that the total number of jobs created will far surpass the jobs lost in a green economy. The transition to a cleaner economy will have a profound effect on individuals and com-