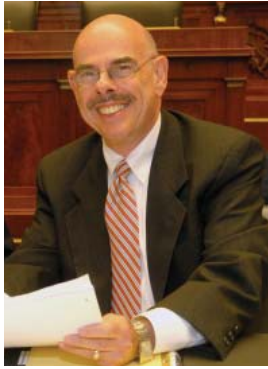


# Los Angeles Leads the Way in Tackling the Challenge of Global Warming

*Henry A. Waxman*



Los Angeles has a remarkable history of rising to meet its environmental challenges. Our local smog problem helped spur national action that led to the highly successful Clean Air Act. And after our own Santa Monica Bay was choked with sewage, it became one of the first water bodies designated as part of a national effort to protect and restore estuaries, the diverse and special places where rivers meet the oceans.

Los Angeles is now leading the way in tackling the challenge of global warming. Some of the same policies that are cutting pollution and spurring renewable energy here at home are now being considered at the federal level. I'm proud to have co-authored legislation that would cut global warming pollution to the levels scientists say are necessary to mitigate climate change impacts. It will do this while creating millions of new clean energy jobs, saving consumers billions of dollars in energy costs, and enhancing America's energy independence.

The American Clean Energy and Security Act (H.R. 2454) is a comprehensive approach to moving our nation to a clean energy economy. The bill continuously ratchets down the amount of global warming pollution that can be emitted between now and 2050, along with complementary policies that will stimulate new economic growth in the clean energy sector and protect consumers and industry from high energy prices.

We need this new law for our economy and to address our dangerous dependence on foreign oil. We also need it to prevent destabilizing environmental impacts. For example, the Santa Monica Bay is likely to suffer as global temperatures increase. Scientists predict that sea levels will rise and warming air and ocean temperatures will change storm patterns. In addition, the same pollution causing global warming is also changing the ocean's chemistry, making it more acidic and unlivable for certain species. The science is clear – these changes are already beginning to take place and are happening with alarming speed. Even without ex-

acerbated water supply problems and disruption of agricultural activities we are likely to face in a warmer world, these impacts issue a call to action.

We must act now, and we must act decisively. The House of Representatives passed my bill in June 2009. Soon, the U.S. Senate will begin discussing it. Unfortunately, no matter how quickly the bill is passed, the planet and the Bay will be subjected to some future warming. That's why the legislation also invests in adaptation. It will provide an estimated \$20 million each year to California for expenses associated with building resiliency into our ecosystems and infrastructure, in response to the anticipated impacts of a changing climate.

This investment will help address impacts associated with climate change, including protecting and restoring our kelp forests and coastal wetlands which will absorb some of the impacts of sea level rise and resulting coastal erosion as well as store significant amounts of carbon. In addition, restoration of our inland streams and wetlands will help to absorb and process pollutants, mitigate the increased intensity of storms, and provide infiltration and recharge of our over-taxed groundwater system.

Finally, there is a need for climate change research focused on Santa Monica Bay to pinpoint potential impacts and to inform the development of restoration and infrastructure improvements, which target vulnerable land to protect and establish plans for areas where no protections will suffice.

We have worked hard for decades to preserve and improve our environment in Los Angeles. I hope you'll join me in supporting this crucial legislation and protecting that critical legacy.

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*Representative Henry A. Waxman represents California's 30th Congressional District, which includes the cities of Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Malibu, Westlake Village and West Hollywood, as well as such areas of Los Angeles as Beverly-Fairfax, Pacific Palisades, Brentwood, Beverlywood, Topanga, Agoura, Chatsworth, West Hills, Canoga Park, and Westwood.*