



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

State Legislator Letter to Pres. Biden on COP26

[BRIAN KAVANAGH](#) November 5, 2021

State Legislator Letter to Pres. Biden on COP26

November 1, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

We, the undersigned state legislators, urge you to strengthen the federal government's climate commitments under the Paris Agreement at COP26. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world is on an emissions trajectory that places us far beyond the goal of 1.5°C maximum warming by midcentury. As the largest historical contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, the United States has both a moral and practical responsibility to achieve net-zero emissions by or before 2050.

The federal government is not alone in its efforts to decarbonize. As state legislators, we are committed to doing our part to address the climate crisis. More than two-thirds of US states

and territories have some form of Renewable Portfolio Standard or Clean Energy Standard, and more than a dozen have committed to 100% clean energy, with implementation dates ranging from 2030 to 2050. As the federal government considers setting its own Clean Energy Standard, it would do well to look to the states for guidance and encouragement.

States are the laboratories of democracy, and we are reducing emissions in myriad ways while building the new clean energy economy and addressing systemic inequities. Some states have set economy-wide net-zero emissions targets, and others have turned to carbon pricing as the most efficient way to meet our goals. States are transitioning fleets to no-emissions vehicles, reducing building energy use, and protecting natural landscapes to enhance carbon sequestration.

States rely on the federal government to provide a strong baseline policy. States that struggle to address climate change legislatively look to the federal government to set strong emissions and air quality standards. Binding federal commitments to phase out fossil fuel usage and accelerate the transition to renewable energy are overdue.

Americans are already suffering the effects of climate change. The historic damages we have seen this year from hurricanes and wildfires, droughts and flooding, heat waves and cold snaps, will only increase. However, if we act with conviction now, we can maintain this country and planet for future generations. The United States has long been a world leader in overcoming massive challenges. We encourage the US federal government to lead by example at COP26 in committing to and achieving full decarbonization, just as we strive to do so in our states.

Sincerely,

[LEGISLATORS]