



# The Climate Stewardship Act

## Fact Sheet

The Climate Stewardship Act, sponsored by Senators John McCain and Joseph Lieberman, is a bipartisan national plan for action to begin solving one of the more serious environmental threats of our time – global warming. More and more carbon pollution is being pumped into the atmosphere from smokestacks and tailpipes as we burn coal and oil. As this blanket of heat-trapping gas thickens in the atmosphere, the planet is warming at an accelerating pace. Scientists predict that if no action is taken to reduce global warming, the changes we experience this century could be as much as ten times more severe than last century's one degree temperature increase.

The Climate Stewardship Act would take a first step in dealing with this environmental threat by requiring industry to control the amount of pollution that they emit to the atmosphere. The goals of the Act are modest, but it is important to get started now. Science indicates that most of the carbon pollution that is added to the atmosphere in the coming years will linger for decades.

### Facts about the Climate Stewardship Act:

- **Mandatory reductions:** The Act requires power plants, oil companies and factories to collectively reduce their emissions to what they emitted in the year 2000, and it gives them until 2010 to do it.
- **It incorporates a balanced, flexible approach** that has won support from industry, farmers, and conservation groups. Companies that recognize the need to reduce pollution support the innovative way the Act allows businesses to devise their own solutions to meet the national emissions goals.
- **The Act creates an emissions trading system** under which companies that achieve more pollution reductions than required can sell those excess reductions to other companies to help them meet their commitments. This system is modeled after a successful U.S. acid rain program that has encouraged innovation and reduced the costs of environmental progress.
- **Farmers benefit** from the Act's provisions to allow them to be part of the solution – and tap a new source of farm income along the way. As part of the emissions trading system, companies can help meet a portion of their emissions goal by paying farmers to increase the amount of carbon stored in the soil and on their lands through conservation practices such as no-till farming.
- **The Climate Stewardship Act will help protect the environment.** Global warming poses a wide range of threats to public health, to our local fish and wildlife resources, and to the wild places that define America's unique landscapes. Global warming means more than simply higher temperatures. As the atmosphere warms, there is a ripple effect throughout ecosystems as sea levels rise, water temperatures become warmer, precipitation patterns change, and extreme weather emergencies such as droughts become more frequent and more severe.