



# EESI UPDATE

*A periodic update to friends of the Environmental and Energy Study Institute on our work in policymaker education, coalition building, and policy development*

## Remembering EESI Board Member Bob Edgar

Courtesy of Common Cause



**EESI BOARD MEMBER** and former Representative Bob Edgar (D-PA), who had been president and CEO of Common Cause since 2007, passed away on April 23, one month shy of his 70th birthday.

EESI Executive Director Carol Werner, who first worked with Bob in the mid-1980s when he was in Congress, spoke of a sense of deep personal loss as well as a loss to our society, "Bob was an amazing person who made such a difference in so many ways. What a loss for so many and for

our country. My personal sadness is overwhelming – we have been so fortunate to have Bob on our board... and to know him. He has always been an incredible model for public service and the values of a democratic society. He brought great energy, courage, wisdom, leadership, unflagging commitment and a wonderful sense of humor to all he did."

EESI Board Member Claudine Schneider (former Representative, R-RI) said, "Having just spent time with Bob a few weeks ago, the news of his passing is both shocking and sad. We served in Congress together and I could always count on his support for initiatives related to women, minorities, the environment, and peace. When we last spoke, he made it clear that he had no intention of retiring until we realized justice and peace on Earth. May his peace continue to stimulate our own."

Bob Edgar, a selfless public servant during his 12 years in Congress, was a founding member of the Environmental and Energy Study Conference and Institute, EESI's predecessor. Learn more about his accomplishments at [bit.ly/bobedgar](http://bit.ly/bobedgar). ■

INSIDE	
Climate Change Re-Enters Political Lexicon	2
Obama's Climate Action Plan	3
Energy 101 Help My House	4
Climate Change: Communities of Color and Tribes at Risk	5
House Members Speak at Clean Energy EXPO	6
Why Are Short-Lived Climate Pollutants Important?	8

## EESI One of Only Five Top-Rated Environmental Non-profits in D.C.

### EESI Needs Just Six More 4- or 5-Star Reviews to Achieve Top-Rated Status in 2013!



THANKS TO THE MANY fantastic reviews written by our wonderful supporters, EESI is proud to announce it is one of only five environmental non-profits in Washington, D.C., to have won the coveted 2012 Top Rated Award from GreatNonprofits. Only 1 percent of eligible nonprofits won this accolade. EESI made the cut for the second time straight in 2012. GreatNonprofits, the leading platform for nonprofit reviews and ratings in the United States, is currently gathering reviews for the 2013 Top-Rated Award. Reviews are due by October 31, 2013 (to review EESI—it only takes two minutes—please visit <http://bit.ly/rateEESI>. Thanks!).

GreatNonprofits announced on Earth Day (April 22) that Washington, D.C., has the most Top-Rated Environmental Nonprofits of any city in the United States, with a total of five, including EESI.

EESI also received the top rating—Four Stars—from Charity Navigator in 2012, for the sixth time in a row. This puts EESI in the top 3% of nonprofits Charity Navigator evaluates. America's largest independent charity evaluator reviews 17 governance and ethical practices as well as measures of openness when making its determinations. It awards its top rating only to the most fiscally responsible and transparent organizations, whose best practices minimize the chance of unethical activities. ■

## RECENT BRIEFINGS

### FEBRUARY

- Reducing Short-Lived Climate Pollutants: An International Response for Fast-Action Climate Mitigation?

- Renewable Energy: Technology, Trends, and Economics

### MARCH

- Climate Change: Challenges and Opportunities for Communities of Color and Tribal Nations
- The Impact of Public Transportation on Real Estate Values
- Public Perceptions about Global Warming and Government Involvement in the Issue

### APRIL

- The 2014 Budget: Impacts on Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy
- Aviation Carbon Emissions: What's the Next Step?
- Harnessing Landfill Methane to Benefit Local Economies and the Environment

### MAY

- Energy Efficient Infrastructure for More Resilient Local Economies: The Role of District Energy, CHP, and Microgrids
- How Combined Heat and Power Saves Money, Reduces Emissions & Improves Energy Security

### JUNE

- State Clean Energy Innovations and the Value of Federal-State Partnerships
- 16th Annual Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO + Forum
- Complete Streets: Improving Safety and Choices for All

### JULY

- Electric Transmission 101: How the Grid Works

**Materials from our briefings are available at:**  
[www.eesi.org/briefings](http://www.eesi.org/briefings)

# Climate Change Re-Enters Political Lexicon

## A Word From EESI Executive Director Carol Werner

**WHEN OUR LAST *EESI UPDATE*** came out, our country was emerging from a hard fought presidential campaign. We called for renewed bipartisanship on the key issue of climate change. Climate change has certainly re-entered the political lexicon, after having been largely ignored by the candidates. In his State of the Union speech, President Barack Obama reiterated the critical need to address climate change, after a year which saw record heat, drought, and weather extremes (e.g., Hurricane Sandy). On June 20, he released his long-awaited Climate Action Plan (see article on facing page), which sets out his administration's policies for the three years to come. The President is focusing on steps that can be taken by the executive branch, without Congressional action. This also is a recommendation I and others made as a member of the Presidential Climate Action Project's National Advisory Committee.

Nevertheless, Congress is beginning to take action. It is certainly difficult to move past the bitter partisanship battles that characterized the November elections, but progress is being made. A bipartisan energy efficiency bill, the *Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act* (S. 761), is rallying support from a wide range of organizations that are not usually lined up on the same side, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Alliance to Save Energy, the Bipartisan Policy Center, the Business Roundtable, and of course EESI. Co-sponsored by Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) and Senator Rob Portman (R-Ohio), the Shaheen-Portman bill seeks to promote energy efficiency in industrial, commercial and residential buildings through voluntary building code standards, a private financing program at the state level, as well as other measures.

Meanwhile, the Senate Committee on Agriculture has sent a strong message in favor of renewable bioenergy, calling for \$900 million in mandatory funds for the Farm Bill's energy title programs over the next five years. The bill passed the Senate with substantial bipartisan support (66-27). In letters sent to both the Senate and House Agriculture Committees, I emphasized that a strong energy title, with manda-

tory funding, is key to creating strong, sustainable, renewable bio-based energy industries. Such industries will generate jobs and economic development, improve both local and national energy security, and reduce environmental pollution and harmful climate change. The House version was defeated on June 20, but the bill should be taken up again later this summer.

Importantly, Senators and House members are speaking out regularly and passionately about climate change. Nearly two dozen Representatives from all across the country, both senior and junior members, formed the Safe Climate Caucus following President Obama's State of the Union speech. They have committed themselves to speaking on the House floor every single day about the urgent need to tackle climate change. Leaders like this will help keep climate change at the forefront.



**The Safe Climate Caucus is launched (Feb. 15)**

EESI also is pushing hard to address short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs), such as black carbon, methane, tropospheric ozone, and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). As discussed in our fact sheet, "Short-Lived Climate Pollutants: Why Are They Important?" (see our article on page 8), these gases and particulates are responsible for nearly half of current global warming and generally last less than 20 years in the atmosphere. Their relatively short atmospheric lifetimes, but significant warming impacts, make them particularly good candidates for fast-action climate change mitigation strategies. Reducing SLCP emissions is a huge win-win proposition. According to

*(continued on page 7)*

## President Obama Announces Climate Action Plan



**THE TEMPERATURE WAS 92 DEGREES** as President Obama removed his jacket in front of a Georgetown University audience before embarking on his historic climate change speech on June 25. Referring to climate change skeptics as the “flat earth society,” Obama stated that due to abnormally high temperatures, and more frequent droughts, wildfires, and extreme storms over the past two decades, the United States can no longer wait to take federal actions to combat the causes and effects of climate change. With that, the President released his Climate Action Plan to reduce CO2 emissions and prepare the nation for climate change.

Crucial to Obama’s strategy to take executive action on this issue is the 2007 Supreme Court ruling that greenhouse gases are subject to the *Clean Air Act*. The ruling found the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the authority to regulate these gases. A prime target for such regulations are the country’s existing coal- and gas-fired power plants, which account for about 40 percent of U.S. carbon pollution. Obama stated that he is directing the EPA to promulgate draft CO2 emissions standards for existing power plants by 2014 in a way that provides flexibility to states.

In addition to setting CO2 emission standards, Obama’s plan will release \$8 billion in loan guarantees for advanced fossil fuel and efficiency projects. It will strengthen the Better Building Challenge to increase building efficiency 20 percent by 2020. The plan directs the Department of the Interior to permit enough renewable energy projects on public lands to power six million homes by 2020. Additionally, it calls for 20 percent of all energy for federal buildings to be from renewable sources, and for federally assisted housing to deploy 100 megawatts of new renewable energy, both by 2020.

Likening the process of stabilizing climate change to “tapping the brakes of a car before you come to a complete stop and

then can shift into reverse,” Obama acknowledged that as the United States reduces emissions, global warming will still continue for years. As a result, the President said, he sent a budget to Congress that includes funding to prepare for extreme droughts and floods, reduce the risk of wildfires and strengthen sea barriers in coastal states.

Obama did not hesitate to discuss the political facets of climate policy. He spent substantial time pointing out that Republicans have historically taken the lead on certain environmental issues: the EPA was established under President Nixon, and George H.W. Bush was the first president to declare that human activities drive climate change. Obama noted that reducing pollution was a relatively nonpartisan issue some years ago, when John McCain led a bipartisan group of Senators to try to implement a nationwide cap and trade system for CO2 emissions.

Obama chided opponents of emission reduction policies for lacking faith in the resiliency and ingenuity of American business, telling the audience, “These critics seem to think that when we ask our businesses to innovate and reduce pollution and lead, they can’t or they won’t do it. [. . .] But in America, we know that’s not true.” He cited the elimination of smog, acid rain, and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), as well as stricter fuel standards in the auto industry, as examples of past American environmental initiatives that have sparked innovation and prompted industries to thrive rather than suffer.

Finally, Obama addressed climate agreements on the international stage, recalling his agreement earlier this month with President Xi Jinping of China to phase down hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) use under the Montreal Protocol. Obama stated that unless there is no other option to generate electricity, the United States would no longer finance new coal plants overseas that do not deploy carbon capture technology, and called on other countries to join the pledge. Furthermore, he has directed his administration to begin negotiations toward global free trade in environmental goods and services for a low-carbon economy. Without providing explicit details, Obama pledged to help negotiate an ambitious international climate agreement by 2015.

Obama conjured memories of President Kennedy declaring that America would put a man on the moon by the end of the 1960s when he told the audience that although addressing climate change will be a difficult challenge, it will ultimately bolster the American economy and solidify the legacy of this generation. “While we may not live to see the full realization of our ambition,” Obama said, “We will have the satisfaction of knowing that the world we leave to our children will be better off for what we did.” ■



# ENERGY 101

## Energy 101 Framework Unveiled

**ENERGY 101 WAS JOINTLY UNVEILED** by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), the University of Maryland, and EESI during an April 10 webinar. Energy 101 is a unique, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary model framework designed to introduce college students to energy literacy and sustainability and to encourage them to pursue energy careers.

The new Energy 101 Model Framework is designed to challenge college students at two- and four-year colleges across the country to explore the science and social science behind sound energy decision-making and to teach them to make informed choices about energy production, energy use, and sustainable development. It will also introduce students at an early point in their college experience to a variety of energy careers. The Framework, which can be modified to suit differing local and regional interests and needs, builds on a national dialog, involving thousands of individuals, which began over two years ago with the development of DOE's *Energy Literacy: Essential Principles and Fundamental Concepts for Energy Education*.

"The United States faces enormous pressure to develop more energy resources to meet our demands for fuel and electricity. How do we accomplish this while addressing health, security,

economic, climate, and other environmental concerns? We think everyone should have a basic understanding of energy, and college students in particular must be empowered through better information," said Carol Werner, EESI's Executive Director.

A pilot Energy 101 course, *Designing a Sustainable World*, was launched on January 25 at the University of Maryland. "The course encourages students to take a Leonardo Da Vinci approach to think out of the box and apply basic design tools to map out and explore solutions. The students submit their design projects to an e-portfolio, which will enable them to continue to build upon their designs well beyond the course, encouraging them to be life-long innovators," said Dr. Leigh Abts, the co-developer of the course with Dr. Idalis Villanueva. In addition to the University of Maryland, Cecil Community College and Harford Community College, both in Maryland, are teaching their own pilot Energy 101 courses based on the curricular framework. Course modules will be available through the DOE's National Training and Education Resource (NTER), a cloud-based training tool that allows for content creation and sharing.

Learn more about the Energy 101 project, and join the initiative, at [www.eesi.org/energy101](http://www.eesi.org/energy101) or email [energy101@eesi.org](mailto:energy101@eesi.org). ■

## Results of "Help My House" Energy Efficiency Pilot Released



Insulating a water heater

**EESI AND SOUTH CAROLINA'S** customer-owned electric cooperatives (co-ops) have released the results of the "Help My House" Loan Pilot Program. The pilot provided loans to co-op member-owners to make energy efficiency improvements to their homes. The loans are being repaid to the co-ops through participants' utility bills, in a process known as on-bill financing. Billing data on the 125 participating South Carolina homes

finds an overall 34 percent reduction in energy use (1.35 million kWh) in the year after the work was completed, an average savings of \$288 per home after loan payments.

The low-interest 10-year loans (which averaged just under \$7,700) are on track for a simple payback of 6.6 years, nearly identical to projections released last year. The average participating home is expected to have net savings of more than \$8,500 over 15 years. The pilot applied a comprehensive "whole house" approach, in which all of the energy efficiency measures were evaluated as part of the same system. Partici-

pating homes received a combination of air sealing, duct repair, HVAC upgrades, and insulation improvements.

The statewide Central Electric Power Cooperative and The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina launched the pilot program in 2011, with EESI providing technical and policy support. Eight participating South Carolina co-ops marketed the pilot, screened prospects, conducted audits, presented loan documents, advised participants and provided strategic project guidance. Loan funds were partially provided through a no-interest loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

EESI is encouraged by the pilot's results, which demonstrate that energy efficiency retrofits can be successfully implemented using on-bill financing. While availability of loan capital remains an obstacle for a larger program (a problem EESI is working on), three of the participating South Carolina co-ops are moving ahead under the Help My House model. Two South Carolina co-ops that did not participate in the pilot are now initiating programs.

The recently-passed Senate farm bill authorizes the creation of the Rural Energy Savings Program (RESP), which would provide loans and assistance to co-ops around the country to start or scale up on-bill financing programs. ■

## Climate Change: Communities of Color and Tribes at Risk

**EESI TEAMED UP** with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the Moapa Band of Paiute Indians, and the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) to hold a March 18 briefing on the disproportionate impacts of climate change on communities of color and tribal nations. Indeed, many communities of color exist in dense, congested urban areas, which disproportionately exposes them to air pollution, extreme weather events, and the heat island effect. Meanwhile, tribal nations face challenges to their way of life because of droughts and more severe climate variance.



Jacqueline Pata

Representative Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) opened the discussion, stressing the need for a proactive stance on climate change mitigation. Congressman Grijalva said that policymakers have yet to come to grips with how to handle climate change, but he again urged Congress to act. The Executive Director of the National Congress of American Indians, Jacqueline Pata, noted that tribal nations have adapted to climate change for centuries, but the climate has now become much less predictable and this variance is adversely affecting water supplies and harvest cycles. Most notably, climate change is resulting in lower yields from salmon runs and is intensifying wildfires and droughts.



Joseph Reed

NAACP Policy Analyst Joseph Reed read a statement by the Director of the NAACP's Washington Bureau, Hilary O. Shelton, which noted that "communities of color have historically experienced environmental inequalities more than any other group of Americans." Furthermore, they "have much less access to resources to mitigate these problems, including adequate health care. One need to look no further than New Orleans, where the majority of those who lost everything, including in some cases their lives, in 2005 with Hurricane Katrina, were African American."

William Anderson, Chairman of the Moapa Band of Paiute Indians, pointed out that climate change isn't the only adverse impact of fossil fuels. His community is battling a coal plant whose coal ash emissions are provoking major health problems. Members of Chairman Anderson's tribe suffer from high rates of lung disease, thyroid disease, and asthma, among other ailments. Many other communities in close proximity to coal plants also face such health problems. A recent NAACP report, *Coal Blooded*, shows that pollution from coal-fired power plants disproportionately affects low-income communities and communities of color.



Rep. Raul Grijalva speaking at EESI's March 18 briefing

On the flip side, renewable energy and energy efficiency projects can be a veritable boon for these communities, by providing well-paid, local jobs. Opportunities abound: Anthony Giancattarino, Coordinator of Research and Advocacy at the Center for Social Inclusion, pointed out that large solar resources exist in communities of color and tribal nations. Yet very few solar projects have been launched in these areas. Indeed, Native American land comprises approximately two percent of U.S. land, but contains an estimated five percent of the nation's renewable energy resources. According to Giancattarino, low property ownership rates, limited inclusion in local planning, a lack of technical and legal capacity support, and a lack of access to capital and financing are all holding up progress in these communities.

Fortunately, building an inclusive clean energy economy can help address many of these obstacles. Shamar Bibbins, Senior Political Associate at Green for All, explained how her organization is helping to do just that and lift people out of poverty. From a federal policy standpoint, Green For All is calling for an end to fossil fuel subsidies, for carbon pricing, and for more investment in our infrastructure. Bibbins noted that "the clean energy sector creates three times as many jobs per dollar as fossil fuels." ■

### RECENT EESI PUBLICATIONS

- Jobs in Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
- Combined Heat and Power
- Landfill Methane
- Obama Administration FY 2014 Budget Proposal: Sustainable Energy, Buildings, Transportation and Climate
- Polling the American Public on Climate Change
- Short-Lived Climate Pollutants: Why Are They Important?
- Faith Organizations and Climate Change

*Fact sheets and issue briefs can be found at:*

[www.eesi.org/pubs](http://www.eesi.org/pubs)

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**A GREAT BIG  
THANK YOU  
TO OUR INTERNS!**

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## 2013 Congressional Clean Energy Expo:

### Caucus Co-Chairs Van Hollen and Reichert, Reps. Cardenas and Tonko Speak

**Rep. Chris Van Hollen speaking at the EXPO**

**ON JUNE 12**, the Sustainable Energy Coalition and EESI, in cooperation with the House and Senate Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucuses, hosted the 16th annual Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Forum. The EXPO brought together more than 50 businesses, trade associations, government agencies and energy policy research organizations to showcase renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.

**WATCH BRIEFINGS LIVE FROM YOUR DESK**

This year's Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency policy forum was the first ever to be webcast live, thanks to EESI and its videography partner, MGA Media. EESI livecast its first briefing in December 2012. Now most of our briefings can be viewed online, at no charge, while they happen or afterwards.

To learn more, visit [www.eesi.org/briefings](http://www.eesi.org/briefings) and subscribe to our Youtube channel, [eesionline](#).

Midway through the day-long event, four U.S. Representatives from the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus stood at the podium of the Cannon House Caucus Room to address the audience of clean energy leaders in business, science and policy from across the United States. They lauded the success to date in advancing clean energy technology. They also noted the long distance still to go to achieve a more secure energy future.

Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) predicted that two reports would be impetuses of change in the American energy economy. The first is the National Oceanic and Atmos-

pheric Administration (NOAA) announcement that the amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere broke the symbolic milestone of 400 parts per million (ppm) in May. "That is a milestone we do not want to reach," Van Hollen said. He then referred to a paper by the PEW Charitable Trusts, entitled, "Who's winning the Clean Energy Race?" Van Hollen was critical of the United States for providing only \$35 billion of global clean energy investments, compared to China's \$65 billion.



**Rep. Dave Reichert** echoed Van Hollen's assertion that American energy advancement creates American jobs, and expressed his confidence in the American scientific community. He said to the audience of business, science and policy leaders, "You will find the answer to our energy needs."

Following Reichert was Representative Tony Cardenas (D-CA), who pointed out that "the cleanest energy is the energy that we don't use." He insisted that renewable energy and energy efficiency are issues everyone can support: "This is, in my opinion, where the Sierra Club meets the Chamber of Commerce and they walk toward each other not in animus but in friendship and collaboration."

**Rep. Tony Cardenas**

The final Representative to speak was Paul Tonko (D-NY), who asserted that energy imports are largely detrimental to the U.S. economy, foreign policy and the environment. By sending hundreds of billions of dollars to oil-exporting governments, some of which are hostile to the United States, "We're paying for both ends of the war," while growing our debt by investing in other countries rather than our own, he said. ■



## You Can Help Our Country Transition to Sustainable Energy!

**Donate**



**FEDERAL POLICY** is a key driver to technology innovation, efficiency enhancements, and policies that foster sustainability. You are the key to making innovative environmental and energy solutions possible!

From energy efficiency to short-lived climate pollutants, our policymakers *need* EESI's fact-filled briefings, newsletters, and one-on-one assistance to make informed policy decisions.

**You can help our country transition to sustainable energy when you make a tax-deductible gift to EESI in the way that's right for you:**

- **Online.** Make an online donation at [www.eesi.org/donate](http://www.eesi.org/donate) -- make it easier on your budget by making it a **monthly recurring gift** -- and support sustainable energy all year long.
- **By Mail.** Mail your gift to:  
EESI, 1112 16th St NW Suite 300, Washington D.C. 20036
- **Become an EESI Associate – or Renew Today.** EESI Associates are businesses, associations, family foundations, and

individuals who are an important part of the EESI family. A gift of \$1,000, \$2,000, or more will make you an EESI Associate. EESI Associates provide us with the flexibility to put resources in the areas of greatest need – and of greatest opportunity.

- **At Work.** If your employer has a workplace giving program, you can donate through easy paycheck-based deductions. Federal employees and members of the military can give to EESI by designating **CFC #10627**. Many other employers offer workplace giving; we are a member of the **EarthShare** federation.
- **Make a Gift of Stock.** You may be eligible for a tax deduction equal to the fair market value of appreciated stock donated to EESI. Contact 202-662-1887 for our brokerage information.
- **Double Your Impact with an Employer Match.** See if your workplace matches employee contributions.



Thank you for putting your commitment to sustainable energy to work in so many ways – including support for EESI! ■

## Carol Werner Sees a New Resolve on the Hill *(continued from page 2)*



Rep. Scott Peters

NASA research, such reductions will be economically beneficial and have profound health benefits (preventing three million premature deaths annually). Working closely with the office of Representative Scott Peters (pictured), EESI held a briefing on one aspect of the SLCP issue: how to harness landfill methane to provide energy, rather than flaring it off.

We are also focusing on resiliency and adaptation, making our infrastructure more robust in the face of climate-related disasters which are becoming more frequent and intense. I am delighted that an April 2013 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, *Climate Change: Future Federal Adaptation Efforts Could Better Support Local Infrastructure Decision Makers*, referenced our joint EESI-CCAP report, *Climate Adaptation & Transportation: Identifying Information and Assistance*

*Needs*. The GAO notes that our nation "faces the choice of paying more now to account for the risk of climate change, or potentially paying a much larger premium later to repair, modify, or replace infrastructure ill-suited for future conditions," and calls for the federal government to provide local officials, who make most infrastructure decisions, with more information about climate change so they can make better-informed choices. This echoes EESI's own policy recommendations.



Ernest Moniz

As the new Secretary of Energy, Ernest Moniz (pictured), said during his swearing-in ceremony on May 21, "let me make it very clear that there is no ambiguity in terms of the scientific basis calling for a prudent response on climate change. I am not interested in debating what is not debatable. There is plenty to debate as we try and move forward on our climate agenda." With your help, EESI is doing its part to help our nation move toward a sustainable future. ■

## Short-Lived Climate Pollutants: Why Are They Important?

EESI HAS INCREASINGLY FOCUSED on short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs), which may provide the key to slowing climate change while we transition to a carbon-free economy. SLCPs,



Courtesy: Kate McCurrach

Deceptively adorable soot particles.

also known as superpollutants, include black carbon, methane, tropospheric ozone, and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). They are responsible for roughly half of the global warming we are currently experiencing and remain in the atmosphere for less than 20 years. Cutting

SLCP emissions now will, therefore, help mitigate climate change in a generation or less. On the other hand, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the primary driver of climate change (responsible for slightly more than half of human-caused global warming), remains in the atmosphere for hundreds of years. Even if carbon emissions suddenly dropped to zero, the excess CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere would continue to accentuate the greenhouse effect for centuries to come. This is why many argue that reducing SLCP emissions presents our best opportunity to keep global temperatures from rising more than two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, widely agreed as a goal.

Reducing SLCP emissions will also have immediate economic and health benefits. According to NASA research, methane mitigation, for instance, can save up to \$3,500 per ton reduced, for a cost of less than \$250 per ton in most cases. Oil and gas production, and landfills, are large sources of methane emissions. Likewise, approximately half of black carbon reduction measures are cost-saving. NASA also estimates that reducing SLCP emissions would prevent three million premature deaths annually. Indeed, black carbon, also known as soot, is a particularly harmful form of pollution which causes heart attacks and lung damage. Major sources of soot include diesel emissions and inefficient cooking and heating stoves.

Reducing short-lived climate pollutants is no silver bullet: carbon dioxide emissions must be addressed as well if we are to definitively slow and halt human-caused climate change. But tackling SLCPs will buy us some time as we transition to a clean, sustainable economy. And, if no attempts are made to reduce SLCPs, they will, as a group, eventually surpass CO<sub>2</sub> as the primary driver of global warming and exacerbate the situation.

Learn more about the need to tackle SLCP emissions by reading our fact sheet, *Short-Lived Climate Pollutants: Why Are They Important?*, or viewing our briefing. Both are on our website. ■



The Environmental and Energy Study Institute is an independent, non-profit organization founded in 1984 by a bipartisan Congressional caucus dedicated to finding innovative environmental and energy solutions. Our work on climate change, energy efficiency, renewable energy, agriculture, forestry, transportation, buildings, and urban planning issues is made possible through financial support from people like you. Your tax-deductible contribution will help EESI develop innovative policy solutions for a healthy, secure, and sustainable future. **Please visit [www.eesi.org](http://www.eesi.org) to make a secure, online donation, or use the attached envelope. Thank you for your support!**

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