Key Findings on Legal Pathways

• Legal tools are available to decarbonize U.S.
• More than 1,500 specific recommendations for federal, state, local and private action
• Wide variety of types of tools; some are regulatory, but most are not
• These tools would create economic, social, environmental, and security benefits in addition to reducing GHG emissions
Twelve types of legal tools

• Additional regulation
• Reduction or removal of legal barriers
• Market-leveraging approaches
• Removal of incentives for fossil fuel use
• Tradable permits or allowances
• Information/persuasion

• Facilities and operations
• Infrastructure development
• Research and development
• Insurance
• Property rights
• Social equity
Legal Pathways

Energy efficiency, conservation, fuel switching

• Light duty vehicles
• Heavy duty vehicles and freight
• Transportation demand and mode shifting
• Aviation
• Shipping
• Lighting, appliances and other equipment
• Old buildings
• New buildings
• Industrial sector
Legal Pathways

Electricity decarbonization

• Utility-scale renewables
• Distributed renewables
• Transmission, distribution and storage
• Nuclear
• Hydropower
• Phasing out fossil fuels in electricity sector
Legal Pathways

Fuel decarbonization

- Bioenergy feedstock
- Production and delivery of low-carbon gaseous fuels
- Production and delivery of bioenergy fuels
Legal Pathways

Carbon capture and negative emissions

• Carbon capture, sequestration, utilization
• Direct air capture
• Agriculture
• Forestry
Legal Pathways

Non-CO2 climate pollutants

• Black carbon
• Methane
• Fluorinated gases
• Nitrous oxide
Legal Pathways

Cross-cutting approaches to reducing emissions

• Carbon pricing
• Behavior
• Technological innovation
• Financing large-scale projects
• Financing at the grid edge
• Materials consumption and solid waste
• International trade
Carbon pricing alone will not solve everything

Local opposition (e.g. Cape Wind)
Hard-to-measure emissions (e.g. natural gas leakage)
Principal-agent problem (e.g. builders don’t pay occupants’ energy bills)
Sectors with low price elasticity (e.g. some HFC uses)
Sectors with long lead times (e.g. passenger autos)
Public infrastructure construction
Non-carbon externalities (e.g. mining waste)
Moving Forward With the Legal Pathways
By Mobilizing Pro Bono Lawyers
Through Coordinating Law Firms

Drafting federal and state statutes and regulations, model local laws, etc.

Renewable Energy Legal Defense Initiative
Summary and key recommendations volume (160 pages) – free download:
https://www.eli.org/legal-pathways-deep-decarbonization-united-states-summary-and-key-recommendations

Full volume (1,200 pages) – available late March 2019 ($64.95):

The Dozen Types of Legal Tools in the Deep Decarbonization Toolbox:
Prof. Michael B. Gerrard
Columbia Law School
435 West 116th Street
New York, NY 10027
(212) 854-3287
michael.gerrard@law.columbia.edu
http://columbiaclimatelaw.com
Twitter: @MichaelGerrard

Richard A. Horsch
Retired Partner Of Counsel
White & Case LLP
1221 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10020
(917) 520-9956
rhorsch@whitecase.com

Prof. John C. Dernbach
Widener University
Commonwealth Law School
3800 Vartan Way
Harrisburg, PA 17106-9382
(717) 541-1933
jcdernbach@widener.edu
http://ssrn.com/author=411559
http://www.johndernbach.com