

100% Clean Economy Act - Frequently Asked Questions

US Representatives McEachin, Tonko, Haaland, Dingell, Blumenauer, and Pingree have announced that they are working on legislation to be introduced this fall to set a national goal of 100% clean economy by 2050.

What would the 100% Clean Economy Act do?

The discussion draft puts the United States on a path to stop adding climate pollution no later than 2050. Specifically, emitting no more climate pollution than can be removed across all sectors of the economy.

What organizations are supporting this effort?

EDF, LCV, Sierra Club, Center for American Progress, Earthjustice, Environment America, Union of Concerned Scientists, World Wildlife Fund, Voices for Progress, and others.

What provisions are in the 100% Clean Economy Act?

The 100% Clean Economy Act discussion draft has three main provisions:

1. Get started ASAP: would direct federal agencies to act within their existing authority to put the country on a path towards a 100% clean economy.
2. Establish accountability: Require all federal agencies to submit their actions for EPA evaluation, recommendations and report to Congress.
3. Stakeholder input: Establish an advisory committee to recommend adjustments and interim measures to help meet the goal in an equitable and inclusive manner.

Why 100% clean?

The 100% clean goal is consistent with the IPCC report that has said that the world must stop adding climate pollution soon after mid-century in order to have a chance of avoiding the worst effects of climate change. The United States and Europe must reach that goal by 2050. That means we need to dramatically cut pollution across the economy by replacing dirty energy with clean sources. It also means investing in strategies to pull climate pollution from the atmosphere—protecting forests, supporting climate friendly agriculture, and advancing breakthrough technologies.

Will the provisions in this draft bill be enough to achieve a 100% clean economy by 2050?

There is simply no time to waste—whatever agencies can be doing now they should be doing. To accelerate the transformation to a 100% clean economy additional authority may be helpful; the advisory committee established by the bill will recommend additional measures to help the United States stay on track.

How compares to Green New Deal?

This discussion draft and the Green New Deal resolution both have ambitious long-term climate goals: net zero by 2050. The proposal is a start for legislation and focuses on a single objective: establish a goal of 100% clean across the economy no later than 2050. The sooner we get started, the sooner we can get there.

Why not specify 100% renewables?

The transformation to clean energy is a big change; achieving it will mean replacing carbon-polluting energy with wind, solar, and other clean sources of energy across all sectors of our economy—from transportation to manufacturing to electricity. Keeping the goal focused on environmental results – cutting the pollution that causes climate change – allows for maximum opportunities for innovation to find effective, efficient approaches to achieve that goal.

What about equity issues?

The draft bill would require federal agencies to address key issues while taking action, including:

- Improve public health, resilience and environmental outcomes especially for low incomes, rural, tribal, and other communities that are disproportionately vulnerable to climate change;
- Provide benefits for consumers, small business and rural communities;
- Enhance job creation and ensure an equitable transition for workers affected by the transition away from dirty energy; and
- Prepare communities for climate change impacts and risks.

Would this draft bill allow nuclear and CCS to continue in a 100% clean economy?

There are differences of opinion on how we should address climate change, and specifically on what should happen with nuclear and carbon capture and storage. To attract broad support this bill focuses on the environmental/emissions goal of “net zero emissions” as a unifying vision. This doesn’t prohibit any source of energy.

How does this discussion draft define clean energy?

This draft defines clean in environmental terms (net zero emissions) and does not specify what sources of energy count as clean. The net zero greenhouse gas emissions goal means we must replace carbon-polluting energy with wind, solar, and other clean sources of energy across all sectors of our economy—from transportation and manufacturing to electricity.