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CENTER FOR CLEAN AIR POLICY
STATE ROUNDTABLE ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

States have a number of reasons to be concerned about addressing climate change and to consider a viable course of action. Not only do states face potential environmental damages associated with climate change – loss of coastal lands, changes in growing seasons and increased risk of diseases – but they also will be called upon to address related economic and social implications such as loss of agricultural crops and forest resources, declining tourism and new threats to public health. At the same time, states currently confront a host of other environmental challenges, including ozone, acid rain, mercury deposition and haze, that are directly linked to sources of greenhouse gases. Hence there are large incentives to develop strategies that address several pollutants at once, such as encouraging energy conservation at state facilities.

In recognition of the important role states play in addressing global climate change, and their unique capacity to implement creative policy solutions, the Center created the *State Roundtable on Global Climate Change*. Roundtable sessions focus on highlighting areas where states have authority to act or encourage action. Members are encouraged to “think outside the box” and consider a wide range of possible policy responses. Perhaps most important, the *Roundtable* serves as an opportunity for key state leaders to meet, share ideas, and develop coordinated strategies.

The *Roundtable* meets for three to four two-day “dialogues” per year, with conference calls and correspondence in the interim. Each meeting focuses on two or three specific areas for potential state activity as prioritized by *Roundtable* members. For each issue, we examine the potential for emissions reductions, assess the cost-effectiveness, identify political hurdles and opportunities, and discuss possible policy mechanisms. We emphasize how to address hard-to-reach sectors under states’ control and highlight ways to achieve multiple pollutant benefits, such as mechanisms associated with electricity restructuring, including distributed generation and promotion of renewable energy; ways to encourage increased energy efficiency through state implementation plans; and opportunities for improved land-use and transportation planning.

Our kick-off meeting was in December 1998, and five subsequent meetings have been held. These meetings bring together key environmental and energy regulators from thirteen states: *California, Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, New Hampshire, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Wisconsin* along with representatives from state-based groups *STAPPA/ALAPCO, National Association of State Energy Officials*

(NASEO), and the *Ozone Transport commission* (OTC). The group has discussed various approaches for making progress on climate change, including those that are already being tried at the state level. Topics covered to date include:

- Multiple pollutant benefit strategies in the utility sector;
- Industrial sector perspectives on climate change, multiple benefits and states (BPAmoco, Sunoco, Bethlehem Steel, Trigen, DuPont, Ballard);
- Sector-specific energy efficiency goals in the Netherlands;
- STAPPA/ALAPCO's menu of options for reducing GHG emissions;
- New Jersey's voluntary GHG reduction goal;
- Oregon's CO₂ standard for new power plants;
- "Travel Blending" - a new approach to reducing passenger VMT;
- Maryland's Smart Growth Program;
- EPA's State and Local Climate Change Program;
- Rewarding early GHG emissions reductions;
- California's renewable energy program funded through its systems benefit charge;
- Media strategies for advancing climate change topics;
- Opportunities for better coordination with state-based environmental groups;
- Distributed generation's impacts on climate change; and,
- Integrating Clean Energy into Brownfields Redevelopment.

We recognize that states are at different points in grappling with the issue of global climate change. For some states, the issue has risen to the top of the environmental agenda and there is strong support for moving forward. Others are working to better understand the implications for their state and to determine the appropriate response. The *Roundtable* concentrates on identifying approaches that fit within the economic, environmental and political contexts of each participating state.

The Center has utilized the dialogue concept to help strategize on policy options and build support for action at the state, national and international levels. Our formula involves bringing together a core group of key decision makers for a series of targeted discussions that are supported by solid research and analysis by the Center. This approach has worked successfully on a wide range of issues, including acid rain, ozone, transportation and electricity restructuring.

A number of concrete outcomes have already resulted from the Center's *Roundtable*. These range from the launching of a Travel Blending pilot program, the first U.S. example of this innovative approach to reducing transportation-related emissions that was introduced at the *Roundtable*; to fostering the replication of electricity restructuring measures between two states; to helping strengthen the network between environmental and energy regulators.

As climate change measures become a growing part of state policy makers' agendas, we propose to expand our Roundtable to add states both at the cutting edge of climate policy but also where additional peer monitoring is desired. Based on initial discussions or recommendations from other states, we are targeting to add six of the following states: Iowa,

Maine, Minnesota, Utah, Florida, Georgia, Vermont, and Colorado, as well as a select number of cities. In addition, with support from the US EPA, we will be incorporating state and local transportation and planning officials to better address the transportation and land use issues tied to global climate change.