Christine O. Gregoire

Theodore R. Kulongoski

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Janet Napolitano

Bill Richardson

WESTERN REGIONAL CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, western states are experiencing the effects of a hotter, drier climate, including prolonged droughts, excessive heat waves, reduced snow packs, increased snowmelts, decreased spring runoffs, altered precipitation patterns, more severe forest and rangeland fires, widespread forest diseases, and other serious impacts; and

WHEREAS, scientific consensus has developed that increasing emissions of human-caused greenhouse cases (GHGs), including carbon dioxide, methane and other GHGs, that are released into the atmosphere are affecting the Earth's climate; and

WHEREAS, the Western Governors Association (WGA) has declared that climate change could have severe economic and environmental impacts on the Western States in coming decades; and

WHEREAS, the WGA also has declared that action is needed to reduce GHG emissions and that many of these actions can have significant economic and environmental benefits for the Western States, including increased energy efficiency, increased renewable energy generation, improved air quality, cost savings, job growth, increased state revenues, and reduced water pollution; and

WHEREAS, we support the development of national, regional, tribal, state and local programs to reduce GHG emissions; and

WHEREAS, we support national, regional, tribal, state and local level policies on global climate change that are consistent with efforts to develop cost-effective alternative energy sources and more efficient use of energy; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the need for collaboration among states to develop climate change policies that provide consistent approaches to recognize and give credit for actions to reduce GHG emissions; and

WHEREAS, we have already adopted or committed to adopt clean tailpipe standards for passenger vehicles that will result in major reductions in GHG emissions and other pollutants; and

WHEREAS, we support market-based policies to reduce GHG emissions in the most cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, we have set goals to significantly reduce GHG emissions from our respective states; and

WHEREAS, we welcome expanding the partners to this initiative to other states, tribes, Canadian provinces and Mexican states and offer monitoring status to any state, tribe or province interested in observing the initiative;

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the undersigned Governors, jointly establish the Western Regional Climate Action Initiative and agree to collaborate in identifying, evaluating and implementing ways to reduce GHG emissions in our states collectively and to achieve related co-benefits. This collaboration shall include, but is not limited to:

- Setting an overall regional goal, within six months of the effective date of this initiative, to reduce emissions from our states collectively, consistent with state-by-state goals;

- Developing, within eighteen months of the effective date of this agreement, a design for a regional market-based multi-sector mechanism, such as a load-based cap and trade program, to achieve the regional GHG reduction goal; and

- Participating in a multi-state GHG registry to enable tracking, management, and crediting for entities that reduce GHG emissions, consistent with state GHG reporting mechanisms and requirements.

In addition, we commit to continue our independent and collaborative efforts to reduce GHG emissions through:

- Promoting the development and use of clean and renewable energy within the region;

- Increasing the efficiency of energy use within our jurisdictions;

- Advocating regional and national climate policies that reflect the needs and interests of western states, tribes and provinces; and

- Identifying measures in our states, tribes and provinces to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

We will direct our staffs and the appropriate state agencies to meet as soon as is practicable to develop a work plan to move forward with this initiative.

DONE, in five (5) duplicate originals, this 26th day of February, 2007, in Washington, D.C.

Governor Christine O. Gregoire
State of Washington

Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski
State of Oregon

Governor Janet Napolitano
State of Arizona

Governor Bill Richardson
State of New Mexico

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State of California