

**Talking Points for Colorado House Bill 16-1004:
Concerning a Requirement to Include Measurable Goals that are Subject to
Deadlines in Colorado's Climate Action Plan**

General Points

1. Although the most recent Colorado Climate Plan was released in September of 2015, that Plan does not include measurable goals. Measurable goals are needed in order for Colorado to regain its leadership in responding to the threat of climate change. House Bill 16-1004 would require:
 - a. The creation of measurable goals focused on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the State,
 - b. The establishment of deadlines for the accomplishment of those goals, and
 - c. That annual reports analyze the State's progress toward its goals.
2. What doesn't get measured typically doesn't get done!

Environmental and Health Impacts

1. Global climate change (GCC) is already having measurable impacts on average temperatures, precipitation patterns, wildfire frequencies and intensities, land and sea ice amounts, disease transmission, sea level rise, and ocean acidity. Coloradans are impacted directly by the first five items. The time to act – both by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) and employing adaptive strategies (adaptation) – is now.
2. Colorado has a special responsibility and special opportunities to lead in addressing GCC due to:
 - a. Our geography (continental interiors warm more rapidly than coastal areas), our dry climate, and our dependence on snow pack for water;
 - b. Our historical reliance on coal and other fossil fuels;
 - c. The relative availability of sunlight and wind for renewable power generation; and
 - d. Our economic strength compared to other regions of the United States and other countries.
3. A stronger state climate planning process would bring health benefits to Colorado, due to anticipated reductions in power plant and vehicular emissions. For example, we would likely be able to reduce the approximately 500 deaths that are attributable annually to air pollution in Colorado's five major metropolitan areas.

Economic Impacts

1. Currently, Colorado's wind industry employs between 6,000 and 7,000 people, while Colorado's solar industry employs about 4,000 people. As a whole, the "Cleantech"

sector – which also includes fuel cells, hydroelectric power, green transportation, and research in addition to wind and solar – employs over 23,000 Coloradans. A stronger state climate planning process would increase these numbers, while also helping to address climate change.

2. Clear state greenhouse gas goals will allow businesses leaders to better plan for the future of their enterprises.
3. The average temperature in the Rocky Mountain region has increased by about 2° F since the middle of the 19th Century. Under a business-as-usual global emissions scenario, the average temperature will increase another 10 – 12° F by the end of the 21st Century. Failure to make a serious effort to address climate change will have negative economic consequences, including the following:
 - a. Wildfires will continue to increase in frequency and intensity as temperatures and evaporation rates continue to increase. Insured losses for the 2012 Waldo Canyon wildfire alone were nearly half a billion dollars.
 - b. The likelihood of extended droughts will also increase. Such droughts will have severe negative impacts on Colorado’s \$8 billion agricultural sector.
 - c. Snowfall and snowpack levels will decline as well. Less snow will have a negative impact on Colorado’s \$5 billion ski industry.