

## Press Release - Office of the Governor

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### **Governor Martin O'Malley Signs Greenhouse Gas Agreement, Climate Change Executive Order**

#### ***Governor O'Malley Takes Steps to Fight Global Warming, Climate Change in Maryland***

ANNAPOLIS, MD (April 20, 2007) - Today, Governor Martin O'Malley joined with key Cabinet Secretaries, legislators, environmental groups and businesses to announce two landmark initiatives that address global warming and the impacts of sea level rise in Maryland.

The Governor today signed the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), in which Maryland became the 10th state to join the Northeast regional climate change and energy efficiency program.

"I am proud that Maryland is joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which will protect and preserve our communities for future generations," said Governor O'Malley. "The fight to prevent global warming crosses state lines, and Maryland is proud to join its neighbors in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while protecting our electric industry."

"It's great to see Governor O'Malley taking leadership to address global warming. We're racing the clock on this issue, and the Governor is keeping pace," said Brad Heavner, State Director for Environment Maryland.

#### **Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative**

RGGI is the first cap-and-trade program to control carbon dioxide emissions in the United States. The program is aimed primarily at reducing carbon dioxide pollution through a mandatory emissions cap on the electric generating sector, coupled with a market-based trading program to achieve the lowest possible compliance costs through energy efficiency.

Maryland's participation in RGGI will reduce carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from the state's electrical generators by roughly 10 percent from current levels by 2019 by the most cost-effective means.

#### **Executive Order: Maryland Commission on Climate Change**

Governor O'Malley today also signed an [Executive Order](#) that establishes a Climate Change Commission charged with collectively developing an action plan to address the drivers and causes of climate change, prepare for the likely consequences and impacts of climate change to Maryland with and establish firm benchmarks and timetables for implementing the Commission's recommendations.

"Protecting our communities from climate change is not a Democratic issue or a Republican issue - it is a Maryland issue," said Governor O'Malley. "This Executive Order charts a path for the future - one in which we reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and work to prevent sea level rise and coastal flooding."

The Commission on Climate Change is charged with addressing Maryland's climate challenge on all fronts. The Commission will:

- undertake an assessment of climate change impacts, calculate Maryland's carbon footprint, and investigate climate change dynamics with the assistance of the University System of Maryland;
- work together with the Maryland Department of the Environment, the Maryland Energy Administration and a broad set of stakeholders, including renewable and traditional energy providers and the business community, to develop a comprehensive greenhouse gas and carbon footprint reduction strategy; and,
- coordinate with the Maryland Departments of Natural Resources and Planning, and a comprehensive group of planners, emergency responders and environmental organizations, as well as business and insurance representatives, to develop a strategy for reducing Maryland's vulnerability to climate change, with an initial focus on sea level rise and coastal hazards.

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