



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

2010 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

CLIMATE CHANGE & REDUCING GREENHOUSE GAS

ISSUE

The **National Association of Regional Councils (NARC)** supports the commitment of federal funding and flexible policies, incorporating and encouraging the work of multi-jurisdictional regional planning organizations as experienced partners, to create climate resilient communities and regions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PARTNERSHIPS

- Recognize and include local governments and multi-jurisdictional regional planning organizations as partners in national efforts to reduce greenhouse gases (GhGs).
- Continue to assess the potential economic and environmental consequences of proposed policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensure local governments and regions are partners in the process.
- Ensure a “Carbon Market Efficiency Board” or any such entity that oversees a cap-and-trade or carbon investment program to include membership from a multi-jurisdictional regional planning organization.
- Incorporate a regional approach to GhG reduction efforts as a part of the federal interagency Sustainable Communities Partnership efforts.

FUNDING

- Direct a portion of a cap-and-trade allocation to local governments and multi-jurisdictional regional planning organizations to support GhG reduction efforts.
- Use incentives, resources, and technical assistance and training to encourage reduction activities that meet defined targets at the State, local and regional levels.
- Include funding to address adaptation and mitigation for local governments and regional planning organizations.
- Provide urban, suburban and rural regional planning organizations incentives, resources and tools to integrate GhG reduction into transportation planning – See NARC’s Climate Change Framework for more in-depth transportation planning recommendations as it relates to reducing GhG emissions.
- Ensure federal funding opportunities provide for regional planning and plan implementation to garner the greatest GhG reduction results.

PROGRAM

- Address climate change through approaches and policies that balance a commitment to conserving energy, protecting the environment, developing new technologies, and strengthening the economy.
- Implement a multi-pollutant strategy to reduce emissions from major sources that will provide significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- Enact a flexible, predictable, and market based approach to reducing GhG emissions.
- Recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all strategy for reducing GhGs.
- Encourage regional approaches to resolve environmental issues that cross-jurisdictional boundaries.
- Encourage local and regional innovation.
- Require the use of flexible, locally-driven performance measures.
- Reward proactive regional and local GhG reduction efforts.
- Incentivize multi-regional/multi-state collaboration.
- Avoid penalties/restrictions on capacity building as it relates to climate policies.

RESEARCH & EDUCATION

- Increase research on the effects of climate change to local governments and regional planning organizations.
- Create informational instruments to build widespread awareness about the risks of climate change and encourage more informed choices and behavioral changes.
- Support the development and application of technologies that will reduce, capture and/or store GhG emissions and other air pollutants.

BACKGROUND

Climate change is important to regional planning and the plan implementation, particularly within transportation, air quality, economic development, and emergency preparedness and response. Regional planning organizations play an essential role in the development of strategies to reducing greenhouse gases, while preparing local governments and citizen for changes. Since the passage of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C.), regional councils (RCs) and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) have played a critical role in the nation’s efforts to ensure clean air through short and long-term planning and implementation. NARC is committed to ensuring RCs and MPOs have the tools and resources needed to address environmental concern.