

## **This Week in Climate (In)Action**

Check out the League of Conservation Voters' 2016 primers to stay up to date on what all of the presidential candidates are saying about [climate change](#), the [Clean Power Plan](#), and [renewable energy](#)—and be sure to follow LCV on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

In the run up to Paris, this week has seen historic progress in the fight for action on climate, with powerful climate change remarks by Pope Francis at the White House, U.S. Capitol, and United Nations, as well as China's announcement of their plan to cap and price carbon pollution, invest in projects that reduce developing countries' emissions, and limit funding of high-carbon projects.

### **Quote of the week:**

"I call for a courageous and responsible effort to redirect our steps and to avert the most serious effects of the environmental deterioration caused by human activity." – Pope Francis

### **Speed-reads:**

- [China to Announce Cap-and-Trade Program to Limit Emissions](#) (The New York Times)
- [U.N. chief: Listen to Pope Francis on climate action](#) (CNN)

### **A roundup of this week's most important stories:**

#### **"I Am Convinced That We Can Make A Difference" – Pope Francis Reminds the U.S. Of Our "Important Role To Play" In Fighting Climate Change**

Speaking from two of the most prominent political pulpits in the nation, Pope Francis delivered a forceful message to lawmakers and citizens alike: we must act to tackle climate change. The issue has been a central theme of Francis' visit so far.

Both with President Obama at the White House and then in front of a joint-meeting of Congress, the Pope [reminded](#) lawmakers of their responsibility to take "an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature."

The Pope specifically praised the Obama administration's efforts to reduce air pollution and combat climate change, and invoked the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. [saying](#), "we can say that we have defaulted on a promissory note, and now is the time to honor it."

LCV President Gene Karpinski described the Pope's comments as "truly inspiring" and [added](#), "We urge all members of Congress to embrace Pope Francis' call to action."

The Pope also addressed the issue of climate change today in New York, telling the United Nations, **“Any harm done to the environment ... is harm done to humanity.”**

### **Some Republicans Dispute Pope Francis' Authority on Climate**

While many Democrats were quick to praise the Pope for his comments on the need to “protect our common home”, Jeb Bush claimed the Pope should not delve into the issue [because](#), “he’s not a scientist, he’s a religious leader.” Putting aside the fact that Francis has a Master’s degree in chemistry, the overwhelming majority of scientists agree with the Pope’s call to action.

“On moral issues,” said [Marco Rubio](#), “[Francis] speaks with incredible authority...On economic issues, the pope is a person.”

While Pope Francis [says](#) climate change *is* a moral issue, Rubio repeatedly [voted against](#) legislation that would even acknowledge the reality of a changing climate.

### **Clinton Opposes Keystone; Outlines Broad Energy Agenda**

On Tuesday, Hillary Clinton [told](#) an audience in Iowa that building the Keystone XL pipeline was not “in the best interest of what we need to do to combat climate change.” Describing the pipeline as “a distraction from the important work we have to do to combat climate change,” Clinton quickly switched from opposition to proposition in [publishing](#) her energy policy the following day.

The plan includes forging a North American climate compact with Mexico and Canada and establishing a National Infrastructure Bank to drive investment that will create new and improve existing energy infrastructure in the United States.

“Secretary Clinton’s recent clean energy proposal, coupled with her opposition to drilling in the Arctic Ocean and now to Keystone XL, is both inspiring and exciting,” [said Tiernan Sittenfeld](#), LCV’s Senior Vice President of Government Affairs.

### **Senate Dems Outline “A Democratic Vision For A Cleaner Energy Future”**

LCV Vice President of Government Affairs Sara Chieffo [praised](#) Senate Democrats for “focusing on the conversation we need to be having,” in unveiling the latest Democratic Senate Energy Bill, which focuses on modernizing the country’s power infrastructure and reducing the carbon emissions driving climate change.

The comprehensive bill includes policies to grow clean energy, substantially reduce energy waste and finally ending taxpayer giveaways to the country’s largest oil and gas producers, throwing out what Sen. Ron Wyden [described](#) as “an outdated, stagnant set of tax rules in the garbage can.”

While the legislation undoubtedly faces an uphill climb in this Congress, it is seen by some commentators as a signal of intent. “This is a position paper,” said Rob Barnett, a policy analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence. “If Democrats win big in 2016 – win the White House, win back Congress – this is something they’d like to do.”

### **Bush Attacks Environmental Safeguards**

Jeb Bush unveiled a [regulatory platform](#) this week that seeks to gut the Obama administration’s environmental protections, which are designed to grow the economy, protect public health, and combat climate change. Citing a system that is “choking” the nation’s economy, Bush plans to repeal the EPA’s limits on carbon emissions—despite the fact that the [Clean Power Plan](#) will lead to climate benefits worth \$20 billion per year and health benefits worth \$14-\$34 billion per year.

LCV Vice President of Campaigns Daniel J. Weiss was quick to respond. Alongside “misleading the public about the benefits of the Clean Power Plan,” Weiss [said](#) that, “Bush’s proposal to block water safeguards will make a splash with the Koch brothers and big oil, but his proposal demonstrates an utter disregard for public health and ignores strong public support.”

### **Trump: “Unless somebody can prove something to me, I believe there’s weather”**

Donald Trump doubled down on his climate change denial this week, [stating explicitly](#): “I am not a believer in global warming,” on the same day as Pope Francis’ address to Congress.

The Republican frontrunner also offered the novel view that if America does have climate change, “it’s going to be of the nuclear form because we have incompetent politicians watching over us when it comes to nuclear weapons. That’s our big problem.”

### **A look at next week:**

#### **September 25-27: Value Voters Summit, Omni-Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC**

Cruz, Carson, Fiorina, Huckabee, Jindal, Paul, Rubio, Santorum, and Trump are scheduled to attend and speak at the Values Voter Summit at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. Check out the full schedule [here](#).

#### **September 29: Jeb Bush To Unveil Energy Plan, Pittsburgh, PA**

Jeb Bush will [unveil](#) his national energy plan next week (Tuesday, September 29) at Rice Energy Inc., a natural gas company based 35 miles outside Pittsburgh.

#### **October 3: Practical Federalism 2016 Forum, Hooksett, NH**

Organized by the American Principles Project, both Christie and Pataki are confirmed to speak. The full schedule can be found [here](#).

