

Utility industry wants government to cap emissions

Jan. 15 -- The utility industry wants the federal government to swiftly enact legislation capping greenhouse gas emissions, calling for an 80% reduction of carbon emissions by 2050.

The Edison Electric Institute has adopted a climate change framework that includes cap-and-trade legislation, though it still is open to a tax-based or hybrid approach. The initial emission allowance allocation to the electric power sector should be 40%, which is equal to the industry's portion of U.S. carbon emissions, according to the EEI board of directors.

"We believe these principles will help assure that U.S. climate policy is successful in both reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing the very real concerns of our customers as much as possible," said David M. Ratcliffe, chairman of the EEI and president and CEO of Atlanta-based Southern Co.

Heads of the nation's shareholder-owned power providers worked on the framework for several months, said Tom Kuhn, EEI president.

Efficiency and renewable energy are keys to near-term reductions. Maximizing nuclear energy is necessary to achieve mid-term goals, and carbon capture and storage, advanced coal technologies and plug-in hybrid vehicles and electric vehicles also will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions below current levels.

More information, including EEI's Climate Policy Points of Agreement framework, are available at www.eei.org.

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