

Information on Green Party Positions on Energy Policy and Climate Change - 2005

The Green Party of the US advocates strong energy policies at all levels of government to shift decisively away from polluting energy systems towards reduced energy use and clean energy sources.

The Green Party is opposed to the burning of fossil fuels as a primary source of energy due to, among other reasons, global climate change. We are also opposed to the expansion of nuclear energy as a substitute for fossil fuels because nuclear energy is neither clean nor safe. Instead, we urge dramatic steps to reduce consumption of energy in the U.S. and investment in clean, renewable energy sources.

We oppose energy utility deregulation. We support strong protections for electricity and natural gas consumers. These protections can only occur in a locally-controlled, fully regulated energy system that directly links generation with transmission and distribution. We recognize that deregulation and its reliance on markets - as opposed to state-based regulations - is incapable of providing affordable, reliable and clean energy. We support state efforts to regain control over electricity by establishing democratic, public control systems to locally coordinate supply and demand and by eliminating energy trading. Consumers deserve full disclosure of the specific electric generating facilities used to produce their electricity. We support net-metering to make decentralized energy production economically viable.

Energy management must be governed by the principle of conservation, efficiency, and clean renewables. Of highest importance is to use less, then to use wisely, and to have clean production of what is used. We advocate strong public policies to widely deploy conservation, efficiency, and clean renewable energy technologies. Examples include tax credits, renewable portfolio standards, research programs, loans and grants. Existing policies that currently benefit nuclear power, combustion technologies or large hydroelectric dams should be eliminated and reallocated to conservation, efficiency, wind and solar power.

The Green Party is opposed to drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska. New drilling not only threatens local lands and wildlife in Alaska, but also risks accelerating the advance of global climate change.

Greens take the threat of global warming as very serious and are dismayed by the reluctance of the United States to ratify the Kyoto Treaty. February 16 is the day that the Kyoto protocols to curb greenhouse gases and global warming go into effect, 90 days after Russia signed the agreement. "President Bush and Congress' rejection of the Kyoto Accord and of any meaningful action to reduce global warming represents Junk Science in its most dangerous form: the substitution of personal political agendas for overwhelming credible scientific evidence," said Lorna Salzman, candidate for the Green Party's presidential nomination in 2004, and environmental activist and writer for nearly 40 years. "Of all issues facing the world today, including the U.S., the effect of global warming on public health, the economy, food and water supplies, and biodiversity represents the most serious terrorist threat we face -- and it is self-inflicted. When will the media listen to the scientists and expose the lethal indifference of our political leaders to the climate change tsunami that will hit us in the coming decade?"

"President Bush himself admitted that Americans' consumption of energy has grown 40 times faster than energy production over the past decade. If we don't reduce consumption levels, we'll see violent global upheavals, from dangerous weather patterns to food supply emergencies to new wars over energy sources. We face the end of our own democratic system as corporations gain greater control over ever scarcer resources," said Nan Garrett, Georgia Green and Spokesperson for the National Women's Caucus.

[climate change policy continued]

Greens have called for land use policies that prevent sprawl and encourage walking and bicycling to jobs and stores; increased funding for public transportation; major increases in mileage requirements for cars and trucks; and an end to subsidies for gas-powered cars.

"Clean, renewable alternative energy -- wind and solar power, hydrogen and fuel cell development, and other technologies -- is urgently necessary, but won't be sufficient at this late date to thwart global warming," said Mark Dunlea, New York delegate to the national party and former national coordinator of the Campaign for Safe Energy. "Conservation and equitable distribution of energy and other resources must be the great national and global project of the 21st century. It's one of the reasons the Green Party exists."

For More Information:

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