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## Democrats Unveil Climate Bill

By [JOHN M. BRODER](#)

WASHINGTON — The debate on [global warming](#) and energy policy accelerated on Tuesday as two senior House Democrats unveiled a far-reaching bill to cap heat-trapping gases and quicken the country's move away from dependence on [coal](#) and oil.

But the bill leaves critical questions unanswered and has no Republican support. It is thus the beginning, not the end, of the debate in Congress on how to deal with two of [President Obama's](#) priorities, climate change and energy.

The draft measure, written by Representatives [Henry A. Waxman](#) of California and [Edward J. Markey](#) of Massachusetts, sets a slightly more ambitious goal for capping heat-trapping gases than Mr. Obama's proposal. The bill requires that emissions be reduced 20 percent from 2005 levels by 2020, while [Mr. Obama's plan](#) calls for a 14 percent reduction by 2020. Both would reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases by roughly 80 percent by 2050.

The Waxman-Markey bill, the [American Clean Energy and Security Act](#), emerges at a time when many Americans, and their representatives in Congress, are wary of wide-ranging environmental legislation that could raise energy costs and potentially cripple industry. The bill, a version of a so-called cap-and-trade plan, also comes as the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) is about to exert regulatory authority over heat-trapping gases under the [Clean Air Act](#).

The bill would require every region of the country to produce a quarter of its electricity from renewable sources like wind, solar and [geothermal](#) by 2025. A number of lawmakers around the country, particularly in the Southeast, call that goal unrealistic because the natural resources and technology to meet it do not yet exist.

The bill also calls for modernization of the electrical grid, production of more electric vehicles and significant increases in efficiency in buildings, appliances and the generation of electricity.

But the Waxman-Markey proposal does not address how pollution allowances would be

distributed or what percentage might be auctioned or given free. Nor does it say how most of the tens of billions of dollars raised from pollution permits would be spent, or whether the revenue would be returned to consumers to compensate for higher energy bills. Those matters have been left to negotiations, which will begin when Congress returns from its Easter recess on April 20.

Under Mr. Obama's plan, roughly two-thirds of the revenue from pollution permit auctions would be returned to the public in tax breaks. Some members of Congress from both parties want to see all the revenue from any carbon-reduction plan returned to the public in some form.

Mr. Waxman, chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, said in a statement that his measure would create jobs and provide a gradual transition to a more efficient economy.

"Our goal is to strengthen our economy by making America the world leader in new clean-energy and energy-efficiency technologies," Mr. Waxman said.

The bill offers a sweetener for members from coal-producing states by including \$10 billion in new financing for the development of technology to capture and store emissions of carbon dioxide from the burning of coal, which currently produces half of the nation's electricity.

Representative Rick Boucher, a Democrat from the coal-rich southwestern corner of Virginia, insisted on that provision, noting that coal would remain a major part of the nation's energy mix for decades to come.

A coalition of business and environmental groups, the United States Climate Action Partnership, welcomed the measure as a "strong starting point" for addressing emissions of heat-trapping gases and said it had incorporated many of the partnership's recommendations.

But the group, which includes major manufacturing corporations like [Alcoa](#), [DuPont](#) and [General Motors](#), said that it would push for a "substantial" number of free pollution allowances so that its members could make a gradual transition to less-polluting technologies.

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