

WebMemo



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Impact of the Waxman–Markey Climate Change Legislation on the District of Columbia

*David W. Kreutzer, Ph.D., Karen A. Campbell, Ph.D.,
William W. Beach, Ben Lieberman, and Nicolas D. Loris*

On June 26, a 1,427-page climate change bill introduced by Representatives Henry Waxman (D–CA) and Edward Markey (D–MA) passed the House by a narrow margin. The bill, also known as Waxman–Markey, includes a number of alarming provisions, chief among them a cap-and-trade program that would attempt to curb global warming by imposing strict upper limits on the emission of six greenhouse gases, with the primary emphasis on carbon dioxide (CO₂). The mechanism for capping these emissions requires emitters to acquire federally created permits (or “allowances”) for each ton of greenhouse gas emitted.

Because these allowances carry a price—and because 85 percent of the United States’ energy needs come from carbon-emitting fossil fuels—Waxman–Markey is best described as a significant tax on energy use. Since everything Americans use and produce requires energy, the tax hits U.S. pocketbooks again and again. The Heritage Foundation’s Center for Data Analysis forecasts severe consequences, including skyrocketing energy costs, millions of jobs lost, and falling household income and economic activity—all for negligible changes in the global temperature.¹

Workers and families in the District of Columbia may be wondering how cap-and-trade legislation would affect their income, their jobs, and the cost of energy. Implementing Waxman–Markey would put a chokehold on the District of Columbia’s economic potential, reducing gross state product by \$3.61 billion in 2035.

The Waxman–Markey Effect

For the District of Columbia, over the 2012–2035 timeframe, on average cap and trade will:

- Lower gross state product by **\$2,147 million**,
- Reduce personal income by **\$376 million**,
- Destroy **529 jobs**,
- Raise electricity prices by **\$802.62 per household**,
- Raise gasoline prices by **\$0.63 per gallon**.

Source: Heritage Foundation calculations based on the IHS/Global Insight U.S. Macroeconomic and Energy models.

Table 1 • WM 2585-DC  heritage.org



Consumers would be hit hard. Between 2012 (when the restrictions first apply) and 2035 (the last year of this analysis), the prices of electricity and gasoline will rise sharply when compared to prices in a world without cap and trade. By 2035, Americans living in the District of Columbia will see their electricity prices rise by \$1,556.02 and their gasoline prices rise by \$1.30 per gallon solely because of Waxman–Markey.

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at:
www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/wm2585-DC.cfm

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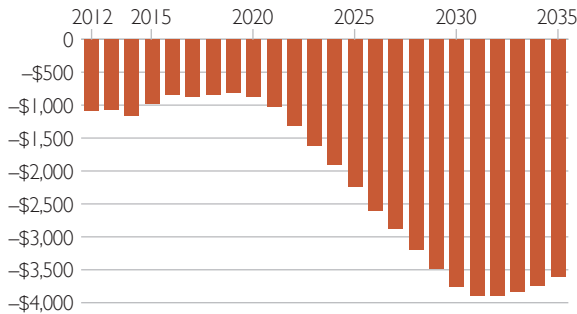
Nothing written here is to be construed as necessarily reflecting the views of The Heritage Foundation or as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any bill before Congress.

Economic Indicators in Washington, D.C.

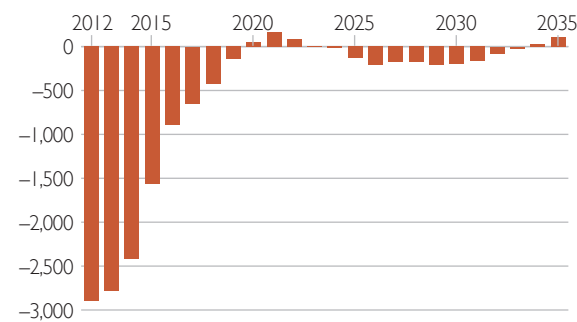
Changes in the District of Columbia's economy due to the Waxman–Markey climate change bill. Figures are adjusted for inflation.

Change in Gross State Product

In Millions of Dollars



Change in Non-Farm Employment



Source: Heritage Foundation calculations using the IHS/Global Insight U.S. Macroeconomic model.

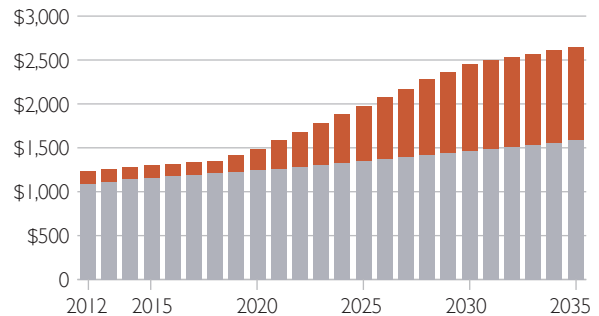
Chart 1 • WM 2585-DC heritage.org

Utility Costs in Washington, D.C.

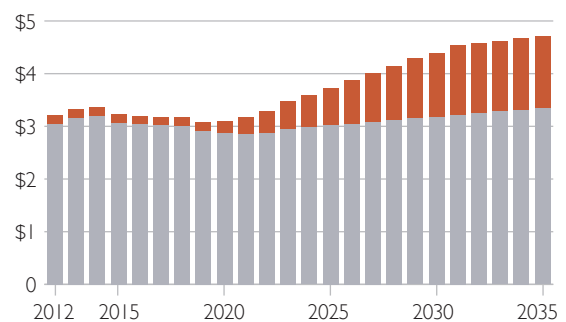
Costs for electricity and gasoline in the District of Columbia with and without the Waxman–Markey climate change bill. Figures are adjusted for inflation.

■ Extra costs due to Waxman–Markey bill ■ Without bill

Average Annual Household Electricity Cost



Cost of a Gallon of Gasoline



Source: Heritage Foundation calculations using the IHS/Global Insight U.S. Macroeconomic model.

Chart 2 • WM 2585-DC heritage.org

As the economy adjusts to shrinking gross domestic product (GDP) and rising energy prices, employment will take a big hit in the District of Columbia. Beginning in 2012, job losses will be 2,901 higher than without a cap-and-trade bill in place. And by 2035, the economy has still not recovered. Job losses will be 107.

Contrary to the claims of an economic boost from green investment and green job creation and “postage stamp” costs, the Waxman–Markey climate change legislation does the complete opposite by increasing energy prices—thereby causing

a considerable reduction in the rate of economic growth, the amount of GDP, household incomes, and employment.

—David W. Kreutzer, Ph.D., is Senior Policy Analyst for Energy Economics and Climate Change, Karen A. Campbell, Ph.D., is Policy Analyst in Macroeconomics, William W. Beach is Director of the Center for Data Analysis, Ben Lieberman is Senior Policy Analyst in Energy and the Environment, and Nicolas D. Loris is a Research Assistant in the Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation.

1. Chip Knappenberger, “Climate Impacts of Waxman–Markey (the IPCC-Based Arithmetic of No Gain),” MasterResource, May 6, 2009, at <http://masterresource.org/?p=2355> (August 3, 2009).