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New Analysis Finds Carbon Removal from Air a Fundamental, Cost-Effective Climate Solution

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Federal policy action can rapidly accelerate direct air capture (DAC) of carbon dioxide and make it a key near-term U.S. climate solution, according to a new, independent analysis and businesses engaged on the issue.

"Direct air capture offers one of America’s best opportunities to use our technological prowess to get an essential climate solution up and running," said John Larsen, Director at Rhodium Group and lead author of the analysis. "The government has a unique role to play to get this necessary element to scale within the time window required. And it can do it through policy mechanisms that are both recognized and trusted. These options include new investments in research, development and deployment, performance-based Clean Energy Standards, Renewable Fuel Standards, and existing tax incentives for carbon-capture technology."

The report follows pivotal findings over the last six months from both the global Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the U.S.’s own National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM), both of which identified DAC as a central strategy for addressing climate change.

"DAC could potentially account for a third of carbon pollution reductions by mid-century – we need policies today to help bring down costs," said Erin Burns, Director of Policy at Carbon180. "Luckily, this is something Congress has done successfully with other renewable energy and carbon-reduction technologies and has begun to do with DAC, through recent updates to the Section 45Q tax credit. Building on that experience and success will not only help reduce emissions, but could also provide an enormous return on investment and open up a nearly $6 trillion global market for carbontech."

"Removing the excess carbon dioxide from our atmosphere is no longer a nice to have – it is a necessity," said Jan Mazurek, ClimateWorks Foundation. "Limiting warming to 1.5°C will require a rapid and far-reaching energy transition, while simultaneously taking carbon pollution out of the air. The debate about doing one or the other is over. And now we know the robust toolbox of U.S. policy options that would give direct air capture a fundamental role in U.S. climate policy and position the U.S. to become the world’s leader in this emerging field."

"We know there is bipartisan support in Congress for making investments in carbon removal technology innovation," said Dr. Addison K. Stark, associate director for energy innovation at the Bipartisan Policy
“Recently, Senators Barrasso (R-WY) and Whitehouse (D-RI) reintroduced a plan to support direct air capture. This report shows how far we can get through enacting robust policies supporting the development and demonstration of direct air capture technology, which should change the calculus of what’s possible on Capitol Hill.”

The report comes from Rhodium Group, the independent research provider that specializes in economic and policy analysis. It was prepared for Carbon180, with financial support from the Linden Trust for Conservation and the ClimateWorks Foundation. A webcast of the report launch is available on the Bipartisan Policy Center website.

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