



NARC National Association of Regional Councils

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

CLIMATE CHANGE & GREENHOUSE GAS

BUILDING REGIONAL COMMUNITIES – LARGE, SMALL, URBAN AND RURAL – THROUGH ADVOCACY, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

ISSUE

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) supports the commitment of federal assistance and funding to mitigate mobile source pollution and successfully promote healthful air quality, particularly as it relates to climate change and greenhouse gas.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CONGRESS

- Increase funding to multi-jurisdictional regional planning organizations in order to comply and maintain compliance with the Clean Air Act.
- Seek coordination among all federal agencies that deal with environmental issues to assist with the mitigation of mobile source pollution.
- Encourage partnerships between federal, state, regional and local government, as well as public and private industry and business entities.
- Support the development and application of technologies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants which harm the environment and directly lead to climate change and global warming.
- Establish national energy policies and incentives
- Support regional government collaboration on determining and employing solutions at the regional level.
- Develop incentive-based programs for localities and regions to create solutions that will protect environmental standards and needs.

BACKGROUND

Climate change and global warming are real issues facing not only the U.S., but the world, with real negative impacts to the environmental and economic survivability of our communities. Actions need to be taken at all levels of government – federal, state and local – to ensure that climate change is addressed through strong policies and clear cut reductions in emissions and overall energy consumption.

Since the passage of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C.), regional councils (councils of government, planning commissions, and development districts) and metropolitan planning organizations have played a critical role in the nation's efforts to ensure clean air. The forthcoming legislation contains amendments to the Clean Air Act, particularly in the areas of mobile sources.

Regional councils and MPOs are responsible for meeting various mobile source air quality standards. NARC is committed to helping regional councils and MPOs meet these regulations through the easing of conformity planning requirements – thereby making it easier and more cost effective to keep the air clean – and by disseminating important information on integrating air quality and transportation planning through various mediums.

NARC, EPA and DOT have maintained a cooperative agreement over the last fifteen years on integrating air quality and transportation planning. During the last six years, this partnership has produced a series of twelve workshops to address the most pressing challenges in attempting to balance healthy air quality with transportation investments. The primary purpose of the workshops was to benefit both metropolitan and rural areas that are required to meet federal air quality standards. Topics have included 8-hour-ozone and PM 2.5 standards, public health, early action compacts, traffic demand management, and others.