



Fresh Air Blogger Briefing: Kassie Siegel, Center for Biological Diversity

INFORMATION

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Fresh Air Bella Center (Live streamed to Fresh Air Downtown)

Yes, He Can’’: President Obama’s Power to Make an International Climate Commitment Without Waiting for Congress

On December 2, 2009, The Center for Biological Diversity and 350.org petitioned the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to set national limits for carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas pollution under the Clean Air Act. The petition seeks to have greenhouse gases designated as “criteria” air pollutants and atmospheric CO₂ capped at 350 parts per million (ppm), the level leading scientists say is necessary to avoid the worst impacts of global warming. The U.S. argues that its hands are tied here in Copenhagen by the weak cap-and-trade bills under debate in Congress, but this Clean Air Act petition demonstrates that the Obama administration already possesses the legal tools to achieve deep and rapid greenhouse emissions reductions from major polluters consistent with what science demands. And the reductions which could be achieved under the Clean Air Act could be the foundation of an agreement in Copenhagen.

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