



Federal and State Governance of Climate Policy in the United States

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State & Local Leadership on Climate

- In the absence of federal action, states and local governments have taken the lead on climate policy:
 - Clean Electricity Standards (CES) and Renewable Portfolio Standards (Rabe 2004; Stokes 2020; Carley 2011).
 - Net-metering (Stokes 2020; Carley 2009).
 - Clean car standards (Vogel 2019; Stokes & Breetz 2019).
 - Cap and trade programs (Rabe 2018; Raymond 2016).
 - Building standards, building electrification.
- Goal for 2021: Scaling up subnational action.

A New Approach to Climate Policy

- “Standards, Investments, Justice.”
 - Timelines and outcomes are clear.
 - Benefits-centered, rather than cost-centered
(Bergquist et al. 2020; Ansolabehere & Konisky 2014; Stokes & Warshaw 2017; Bayulgen & Benegal 2019).
 - Greater focus on income inequality (Goldstein et al 2020; Stokes 2020), and racial inequality (Tessum et al. 2019).

From Collective Action to Distributional Politics

- Increasingly, political scientists argue that climate policy is more an issue of distributional politics (“who pays”) than collective action

(Mildenberger 2020; Aklin & Mildenberger 2020; Hale 2020).

- Notably, state and city leadership runs counter to expectations from collective action theory.

Spillovers

- Technology innovation in one jurisdiction leads to cost declines elsewhere (e.g. solar PV)

(Nemet 2019).

- Policy innovation also spills over:
 - “Race to the top” through policy adoption (Rabe 2006).
 - Industry growth leads to policy feedback spillovers

(Stokes 2020).

Path Forward

- What **coalitions** are necessary to secure climate reforms' passage, their effective implementation, and sustain them for a decade or more?
- Will decarbonizing specific **sectors** require different political and governance approaches (e.g. agriculture vs. electricity)?

THANK YOU!

Questions?



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