

Lincoln Essay Competition

Climate change is one of the defining issues of our time, requiring a myriad of responses. Describe one action the United States could implement to substantially curb greenhouse gas emissions, the key driver of rising global temperatures. Identify the likely positive and negative impacts such an action would have on one or more demographics. Given these impacts, is this something the United States should do? Why or why not?

VT 8th graders' ideas for addressing climate change:

- Solar power
- Tidal hydropower
- Electric cars
- Reforestation
- Capture CO2 in a gigantic tank
- Invest in renewable energy & green transportation
- Teach about climate change in all schools throughout the country (ZEV law)
- Inflate tires sufficiently
- Weatherize homes/businesses to increase efficiency
- Encourage dialogue re: climate change & solutions
- Federal tax incentives for switching to renewable energy sources
- Hydrogen-powered cars
- Ban disposable water bottles
- Hydrogen fuel cells
- Require better beef farming practices
- Carbon tax in Vermont as incentive
- Reduce palm oil production
- Ethanol for cars
- Cap and Trade incentives
- Recycle construction/demolition byproducts
- Invest in scientists to create cleaner fuel
- Project Silver Lining, spraying clouds w/salt water
- Increase numbers of offshore wind turbines
- Manufacture and consume cultured meat to eliminate methane-producing factory farms
- End coal mining
- Encourage Reduce-Recycle-Reuse doctrine
- Pass a law mandating that every city come up with its own greenhouse gas reduction plan
- Reduce use of cars and taxis; increase use of buses and other forms of public transportation
- Make geopolymers instead of concrete
- Increase price of vehicles that use gas and diesel to incentivize electric car purchases
- Reduce the number of animals raised for meat
- Reduce sources of black carbon and diesel
- Lower thermostats/Reduce use of air conditioners
- Increase federal funding for alternative energy sources, technology, and research
- Wind power
- Reduce the amount of time power plants are online by 20%
- Reduce methane gas by feeding cows supplements
- Ration days when gas & diesel vehicles operate
- Nuclear power
- Increase gas tax
- Reduce US military budget by 4%; give part of that to EPA to fund renewable energy sources and part of it to the Department of Education to educate all US citizens about climate change
- Federal carbon tax as incentive
- Create a new branch of government to monitor US emissions and invest in more research
- Methane digesters
- Methane tax
- Tax credit for using LEDs, CFLs
- Hydro dams
- More efficient fossil fuel burning
- Drive less; carpool more, bike, walk, etc.
- Solar panel tax credit
- Hybrid and electric car tax incentives
- More credit for using reusable bags
- Close nuclear power plants
- Limit indiscriminate tree cutting
- Reduce & reuse clothing
- Eat locally-produced food
- Synthetic "Magic Brush" trees to suck up CO2
- Mandate that cars get much better gas mileage
- Label meat according to efficiency of production
- Use natural, not synthetic, rubber
- Everyone eat less meat
- Limit number of cows to 200 per farm
- Devote more resources to the study of power storage & green transportation; promote peer-reviewed research on green energy sources
- EPA offer incentives for first-time car buyers to purchase electric cars
- Set aside choice parking spaces for electric cars
- Plant and harvest seaberry in Vermont and cut down on importing citrus
- Create 100 Tesla Gigafactories worldwide
- End gas subsidies
- Unplug unused appliances
- Eat insects
- Create weekly broadcasts to educate Americans on climate change & how to address it
- SBSP: Space-Based Solar Power, using lasers to transmit power from solar panels in space
- Geothermal energy