



PRESS RELEASE

AG Frosh Joins Former Vice President Al Gore and Coalition of Attorneys General to Combat Climate Change *Coordinated state-based effort to protect climate change progress is unprecedented*

Baltimore, MD (March 29, 2016) --Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today joined Attorneys General from across the nation to announce an unprecedented coalition of top law enforcement officials who pledged to aggressively protect and build upon the progress the United States has made in combatting climate change.

The announcement came during a one-day Attorneys General climate change conference in New York, hosted by New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman and Vermont Attorney General William Sorrell. The group was joined on Tuesday by former Vice President Al Gore to discuss the importance of continuing progress on climate change efforts.

The participating states are exploring working together on initiatives such as ongoing reviews into whether fossil fuel companies misled investors, and on the impact of climate change on businesses and community health.

"Climate changes poses an existential threat to Maryland and to the nation," **Attorney General Frosh said.** "I am proud to join with my colleagues across the country in this important collaboration, and am willing to use every tool at our collective disposal to protect our air, our water and our natural resources. The pledge we are making today can help insure a cleaner and safer future."

Many of the states in the coalition have worked together on previous multi-state environmental efforts, including pressing the EPA to limit climate change pollution from fossil-fueled electric power plants, defending federal rules controlling climate change emissions from large industrial facilities, and pushing for federal controls on emissions of the potent greenhouse gas methane emissions from the oil and natural gas industry.

All of the members of the new coalition are part a coalition of 25 states, cities and counties that intervened to defend the federal Environmental Protection Agency's "Clean Power Plan" against legal challenge.

Today, the interveners filed a brief to the DC Circuit Court defending President Obama's Clean Power Plan rule, which establishes a nationwide framework to achieve meaningful and cost

effective reductions of carbon-dioxide emissions from power plants - the largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions in the nation - and provides States and power plants flexibility to decide how best to achieve these reductions.

The coalition announced on Tuesday is comprised of California, Connecticut, District Of Columbia, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Virginia, Vermont, Washington State and the US Virgin Islands.

"These attorneys general are doing their job and giving us real hope," said former Vice President Gore during a news conference. "Those using unfair and illegal means to prevent change are likely now to be held to account."

"With gridlock and dysfunction gripping Washington on the generation-defining issue of climate change, it is up to the states to lead. We stand ready to defend the next president's climate change agenda and vow to fight any efforts to roll-back the meaningful progress we've made over the past eight years," said **Attorney General Schneiderman**. "And our offices will begin working together on important state-level initiatives, such as investigations into whether fossil fuel companies are misleading their investors about how climate change will impact their investments, fossil fuel companies, and our planet."

Vermont Attorney General William Sorrell said, "We are happy to have work closely with New York to organize this meeting. As we all know, global warming, if not reversed, will be catastrophic for our planet. We, the states, have a role to play in this endeavor and intend to do our part."

"The states represented here today have long been working to sound the alarm, to put smart policies in place to speed our transition to a clean energy future, and to stop power plants from emitting millions of tons of dangerous global warming pollution into our air," said **Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey**. "In Massachusetts, we're a leader in clean energy and together we're taking a thoughtful, aggressive approach to ensuring our planet's health for generations to come."

As a Commonwealth and as a nation, we can't just put our heads in the sand because we are already confronting the realities of climate change. Hampton Roads is our Commonwealth's second most populated region, it's our second biggest economy, and it is the second most vulnerable area in the entire country as climate change drives continued sea-level rise. State government, local governments, and the military are spending millions to prepare for this challenge, and even more significant investment and resiliency measures will be required. I'm proud to have Virginia included in this first-of-its-kind coalition, which recognizes the reality and the pressing threat of manmade climate change and sea level rise. I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues to explore opportunities to address climate change, encourage the growth of our clean energy sectors, and build a cleaner, more sustainable future," said **Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring**.

Connecticut Attorney General George Jepsen, said "I am delighted to meet with so many thoughtful leaders to strategize on ways we can protect our citizens from the greatest threat we collectively face, climate change. I am proud to have worked with them and others in defending the Obama Administration's action to combat global warming, and look forward to discussing how we can best further that important work. I also appreciate the opportunity to discuss

potential future efforts, including the merits of possible joint investigations in this important area."

U.S. Virgin Islands Attorney General Claude Earl Walker said, "The Virgin Islands, which is especially vulnerable to environmental threats, has a particular interest in making sure that companies are honest about what they know about climate change. We are committed to ensuring a fair and transparent market where consumers can make informed choices about what they buy and from whom. If ExxonMobil has tried to cloud their judgment, we are determined to hold the company accountable."

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Maine Attorney General Janet Mills said, "Our natural resources are the lifeblood of our state's economy and our quality of life. Global climate change demands immediate action and I am committed to using the authority of my office to address the problem in a meaningful way by defending important EPA regulations against attacks led by the coal industry and exploring litigation options that will hold the worst polluters accountable for their actions."

"Our office has a mandate to protect the public interest, and this includes ensuring that our community is not negatively affected by preventable climate change. We welcome this crucial state-to-state cooperation to ensure that we do everything we can to fight the causes of climate change regardless of whether the federal government continues to partner with us in these efforts or not," said **District of Columbia Attorney General Karl Racine**.