



## Legislation Summary:

### **An Act relative to 2030 and 2040 emissions benchmarks** (also known as the *Global Warming Solutions Implementation Act*)

Initial bill number: [S.479/H.2149](#) (Bill numbers will change as legislation proceeds.)

Sponsors: Sen. Marc R. Pacheco, Rep. Frank I. Smizik

The 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act was landmark legislation, setting mandated emissions reduction targets for 2020 and 2050, but the bill left promulgation of regulations to achieve those reductions to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, a task that the Department failed to act on in both the Patrick and Baker administration. Regulations regarding how to meet mandated 2020 emissions target were only created after a 2016 [ruling](#) by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

The absence of guide posts for achieving targets leaves us without a clear and cost-effective path for achieving mandated emissions reductions of 80% by 2050. The 2016 ruling prompted regulatory action outlining how to achieve 2020 emissions reductions targets, but not beyond.

Meeting the mandates of the GWSA, in fact, passing legislation that addresses climate change in general, currently rests on submission of a patchwork quilt of legislation, session after session, leaving us generally with temporary and inadequate “fixes”, addressing isolated parts of the problem, e.g., lifting the net metering cap on solar, modernizing the electric grid, etc.

The Global Warming Solutions **Implementation** Act (GWSIA) aims to correct this situation by providing a long-term roadmap for achieving necessary emissions reductions. It is a proactive bill that will provide detailed, quantitative “back-cast”<sup>1</sup> modeling and analysis of the Commonwealth’s entire energy economy and emissions to determine multiple, technically and economically feasible pathways for reaching desired outcomes.

This bill is intended to replace the current, short-term political and legislative actions that potentially lock us into less effective and/or counterproductive measures such as the build out of natural gas pipelines and efforts to restrict/reduce the supply and demand for clean, renewable energy.

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<sup>1</sup> Back-casting (as opposed to “forecasting”) begins with the desired end-point and works backwards to determine ways of getting to that point. Back-casting stipulates, rather than derives the end-point. In the case of the GWSA – the stipulated end-point is 80% percent emissions reductions below 1990 levels by 2050 – back-casting analysis proposed by the GWSIA will be used to determine multiple, plausible pathways for achieving 2050 goals, based on technical and economic feasibility.

Specifically, this bill will require that:

1. the state conduct a detailed, quantitative back-cast modeling and analysis of the Commonwealth's energy economy and emissions by 2020 with the purpose of determining plausible paths for reducing required emissions targets by 2050;
2. the state use the analysis to set GWSA interim 2030 and 2040 emissions limits;
3. within 3 years of setting limits, all agencies will issue a coordinated set of "2050 regulations" to ensure we reach 2050 goals. These regulations may include state or regional, economy-wide carbon pricing;
4. the state collect a carbon emissions fee on large, in-state polluters to fund GWSA implementation work. The fee would be modeled after California's AB32 Implementation Fee plan<sup>2</sup>, adopted in 2010 to support CA's highly successful, 2006 California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32)<sup>3</sup>.

Such a plan is not a novel idea; the EU established a process in 2009 with its [Roadmap 2050](#)<sup>4</sup> to determine its path to a low carbon Europe (80-95% carbon free by 2050).

**League Positions:** Action by appropriate levels of government to encourage the use of renewable resources and energy conservation through funding for research and development, financial incentives, rate-setting policies and mandatory standards.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/adminfee/ab32coifactsheet.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/graph/trends/ghg\\_trends\\_00-15.png](https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/graph/trends/ghg_trends_00-15.png)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.roadmap2050.eu/>