



ITSSD: U.S. Governors Avoid Public Debate Over RGGI While They Observe U.N. Festivities

Article Finds That the Tough Questions Are Not Being Answered - Calls On Nine Northeastern Governors to Open Up the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) to Public Debate

Princeton, NJ – November 28, 2005 – The signatories to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will hold their 11th conference, and the parties to the Kyoto Protocol will meet for the first time, each during the next two weeks in Montreal, Canada. Nine ambitious U.S. governors will be carefully observing these festivities as they place the finishing touches on the Regional Greenhouse Gas initiative (RGGI) that they will soon adopt. The new regulations will cover all of New England, metro-New York and part of the Delaware Valley.

These governors agree with the “Protocol’s strict precautionary principle-based regulatory approach to global warming...” And, they “...hope to draw political strength from the ‘hot winds’ swirling around this atmospheric event to create a nor’easter of their own. Since 2003, they have funneled their... ‘RGGI’ up and down the northeastern U.S. coastline, through the *back-door* of Washington policymaking, and into the communities and pocketbooks of unsuspecting American consumers.” However, they have neglected to inform the American public of their endeavors and of the consequences that will likely follow.

The authors ask, “Why, thus far, has there been *no public debate* on the merits of the RGGI? Will *not* the power plants and other industries targeted by the RGGI be forced to pay for the air they are using? Is the RGGI *not* a mini, regional Kyoto treaty-in-the-making? Are there *not* foreign interests and national constitutional issues involved? Are *not* northeast consumers the ones who will pay in the end?”

According to Slavi Pachovski, “These are important questions that deserve a thoughtful response. Since these questions have remained unanswered, and there is a paucity of credible and publicly available information about the RGGI, we are compelled to ask more probing questions in an effort to spark a public debate.”

A public debate is necessary “*before* the RGGI becomes a reality”, emphasized Lawrence Kogan. “It is now time...for the governors or their staffs to act responsibly and to step forward into the public spotlight for the purpose of initiating” this discussion. “[T]he American people deserve and expect nothing less.”

Copies of the article can be found at: <http://www.itssd.org/publications.htm> .

*The Institute for Trade, Standards and Sustainable Development (ITSSD) is a non-partisan non-profit international legal research organization that examines international law as it relates to trade, industry and **positive** sustainable development around the world.*