

Congressional Climate Change Forum

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Wednesday, 09 May 2007 19:00

Earlier this week I convened a forum to discuss the issues of climate change and energy security, and the potential environmental and economic impacts on the Americas and the world. The event featured a panel of experts from several Latin American nations and scholars who have significantly contributed to international policy initiatives on climate change, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and the Kyoto protocol. The distinguished panelists highlighted the growing need for international cooperation in order to create a unified energy and environmental strategy across the Americas to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and turn the tide of global warming. As the world's leading industrial nation, we sometimes assume that we have all the answers. But it is obvious that the United States has a long way to go to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The panelists spoke about how some Latin American countries have already taken measures to shift to renewable energy, and they may have some lessons to teach us. It is vital that we partner with them to address common threats. The atmosphere knows no borders. If we are to address the global issue of climate change, we must start somewhere, and our neighbors in the Americas are logical allies.