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New York State passes strictest law on greenhouse gas emissions in the US

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A new law passed on June 19 in the state of New York, the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, is the strictest in the nation in terms of regulating emissions and addressing climate change. The bill calls for a 100% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 from the level it was in 1990. California, consistently atop the nation in terms of environmental regulations, has laws on the books calling for an 80% reduction, which is the minimum called for in the Paris Agreement of 2016.

According to a New York Senate press release, the bill will:

- "Minimize the adverse impacts of climate change by reducing statewide greenhouse gas emissions.

- "Improve the state's resiliency to the certain effects and risks of climate change.

- "Ensure that the ongoing transition of the state's energy sector will create good jobs and protect workers and communities during the transition process.

- "Prioritize the safety and health of disadvantaged communities, control the potential regressive impacts of future climate change mitigation, and adopt policies for these communities.

- "Review and prioritize the allocation of public investments."

Language in the bill describes the discernible impact of climate change, the need for New York to follow the Paris Agreement requirements, and the idea that any climate change regulation must consider disadvantaged communities, jobs and the economy. New York has several regulations and initiatives that address climate change already underway, and this most recent law "will build upon these past developments by creating a comprehensive regulatory program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that corresponds with the targets established in executive order no. 24, the state energy plan, and [U.S. Global Change Research Program] and [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] projections."

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