

**Updated Sept. 4, 2012.** There has been considerable discussion of Governor Romney's views about the causes of climate change and about policies such as cap and trade. It's not easy, however, to find detailed documentation. For that reason, I've assembled as much information as I could find about what Romney has said and done over the years, with links to sources (including video or original documents when I could find them).

### **Timeline of Romney's Views on Climate Change**

**Jan. 2003.** Romney takes office as Governor of Massachusetts.

**July 21, 2003.** In a [letter](#) to New York Governor George Pataki, Romney says : "Thank you for your invitation to embark on a cooperative northeast process to reduce the power plant pollution that is harming our climate. I concur that climate change is beginning to effect on [sic] our natural resources and that now is the time to take action toward climate protection. . . . I believe that our joint work to create a flexible market-based regional cap-and-trade system could serve as an effective approach to meeting these goals."

**Jan. 2004 to July 2005.** "During his first 18 months as governor of Massachusetts, Mitt Romney spent considerable time hammering out a sweeping climate change plan to reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions." ([L.A. Times](#)).

**May 6, 2004.** Romney announces the [Massachusetts Climate Protection Plan](#). The Plan was Massachusetts' effort to implement a regional climate change plan adopted by the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEG/ECP) in August 2001. The plan's medium-term goal was to reduce carbon emissions 10% below 1990 levels by 2020. The plan stresses voluntary measures by business in conjunction with a carbon registry and with carbon reductions by government - but it also says: "Massachusetts is committed to active participation in the effort to develop a multi-state cap and trade program covering greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions."

According to Romney, the effort to control greenhouse gases would make sense even if it turned out later that climate change was not a problem: "the benefits will be long-lasting and enormous - benefits to our health, our economy, our quality of life, our very landscape. These are actions we can and must take now, if we are to have 'no regrets' when we transfer our temporary stewardship of this earth to the next generation." Also, the plan states, "A consensus of climate change scientists agrees that the increasing concentrations of GHGs are causing a rise in average global temperatures."

**Nov. 7, 2005.** "On Nov. 7, 2005, Mr. Romney hailed the proposed nine-state climate-

change agreement [the RGGI cap-and trade system] as 'good business' that would spur investment in renewable energy while having only moderate effects on energy bills." Then "alarm bells went off in the business community." Later, Romney said he became concerned about the lack of a cap on permit prices. ([Wall Street Journal](#)).

**Dec. 2005.** Romney changes course on regional cap-and-trade program (RGGI): "in mid-December Romney abruptly pulled his state out — despite the fact that several staffers in his administration had spent two and a half years and more than half a million dollars negotiating and shaping the deal." ([Salon](#)).

**Dec. 2005.** Romney announces he will not run for reelection as governor. ([Boston Globe](#)).

**2006.** "Laying the foundation of a presidential candidacy, Governor Mitt Romney has spent all or part of 212 days outside Massachusetts so far in 2006, an average of more than four days on the road each week, a *Globe* review of his public schedules shows." ([Boston Globe](#)).

**March 16, 2006.** Romney signs smart-growth legislation. ([press release](#)).

**2007-2008.** Romney's first presidential run.

**Feb. 23, 2007.** "Unfortunately, some in the Republican Party are embracing the radical environmental ideas of the liberal left. As governor, I found that thoughtful environmentalism need not be anti-growth and anti-jobs. But Kyoto-style sweeping mandates, imposed unilaterally in the United States, would kill jobs, depress growth and shift manufacturing to the dirtiest developing nations. . . . Republicans should never abandon pro-growth conservative principles in an effort to embrace the ideas of Al Gore. Instead of sweeping mandates, we must use America's power of innovation to develop alternative sources of energy and new technologies that use energy more efficiently." ([UCSB](#)).

**May 2007.** "There are a lot of people who are concerned about global warming. I think we're probably experiencing a change in our climate. Human activity may well be contributing to it. *I think it probably is.* What I don't know is how much of the change is due to human activity, and what action we can take that would change the trajectory of the things we're seeing. " (emphasis added) He calls for "no regrets" policies and says the developing countries must share in any effort to set an international cap. (video [here](#)).

**2010.** In his book, *No Apology*, Romney says: "I believe that climate change is occurring. ... *I also believe that human activity is a contributing factor.* I am uncertain how much of the

warming, however, is attributable to man and how much is attributable to factors out of our control.” (emphasis added) He discusses swapping the payroll tax for a carbon tax, comparing this option favorably with cap-and-trade as a policy measure. He opposes unilateral U.S. action such as a cap-and-trade policy as ineffective and economically disastrous.

**June 2011.** Romney announces presidential run.

**June 3, 2011.** Romney: “I think it’s important for us to reduce our emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases that may well be significant contributors to the climate change and global warming that you’re seeing,” ([Politico](#))

**Oct. 28, 2011.** Speaking at the Consol Energy Center, Romney said, “My view is that we don’t know what’s causing climate change on this planet.” ([NPR](#)) The speech stresses energy independence and aggressive development of fossil fuels, saying “let the drillers start drilling.” (Video [here](#)) (Consol is a Fortune 500 natural gas and coal company.)

**May 30, 2012.** Romney cinches nomination with Texas primary win. ([Fox](#))

**July 11, 2012.** According to a campaign surrogate: “Although Romney does not support EPA’s climate regulations, he is ‘certainly not a denier’ when it comes to the reality of climate change and the fact that human activities are contributing to rising global temperatures . . . But he does not believe unilateral regulations in the United States would be effective because of rising emissions from countries in the developing world, such as India and China.” ([E&E News](#)).

**Sept. 4, 2012.** “I am not a scientist myself. . . But my best assessment of the data is that the world is getting warmer, that human activity contributes to that warming, and that policymakers should therefore consider the risk of negative consequences.” But Romney said debate persists within the scientific community as to “the extent of the warming, the extent of the human contribution and the severity of the risk.”

He said he would not support cap and trade or a carbon tax and endorsed “no regrets” policies that he said would limit emissions while benefiting the U.S. economy even if catastrophic climate change does not come to pass. ([E&E News](#)).