In the days that have followed the President's strong statement on climate change in his second inaugural, many have speculated about what role Congress will play, if any, in moving forward on this issue. (See Greenwire's story here, for example, covering the question and writing about signs from WH press secretary Jay Carney that the President "will pursue both legislative and executive authority actions to address climate change," perhaps with a legislative emphasis on "developing clean energy rather than on pricing carbon.") News this morning relevant to this question: A new bicameral congressional task force to address climate change is being launched, established today by Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island and Rep. Henry Waxman of California, both Dems. From the press release announcing the formation:

> "Congress and the public need to understand that climate change impacts are turning out worse than expected and our window to act is closing," said Rep. Waxman. "This threat is not waiting until we are ready to deal with it. That is why I am pleased to join with Senator Whitehouse to work to educate our colleagues and all Americans about the magnitude of the problem and the urgency of the threat we are confronting."
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> "I'm honored to join Representative Waxman in this effort," said Senator Whitehouse. "Carbon pollution is wreaking havoc on our atmosphere and on our oceans, and it's time to bring all hands on deck as we seek to meet that challenge. We intend this new group to bring the attention and energy to the issue necessary to get something done. I look forward to working with President Obama, Chairman Boxer in the Senate, and any of our other colleagues who wish to join us."

Sure it's a sign of how far expectations have fallen since Rep. Waxman's last major foray into climate change legislation, but nevertheless it's nice to see the phrases "urgency," "carbon pollution," and "havoc" coming from Congress, along with any political acknowledgment of what scientists have been telling us — that our "window to act is closing." So–let's take it, and push.