Over a decade ago, the Waxman-Markey carbon trading bill died in the Senate. President Obama then had to rely entirely on administrative actions to address climate change. Republicans united in a solid wall of violent opposition to climate action. There are some hopeful signs that things may not be quite so tough for President Biden. Here's a rundown of what's happened in the past couple of weeks.

1. **Methane emissions.** The House voted to overturn a Trump rule deregulating methane emissions from the oil and gas industry. The resolution overturning Trump's rollback passed the Senate with support from three Republicans, Susan Collins, Lindsey Graham, and Rob Portman. In the House, every Democrat and twelve Republicans voted to overturn the rollback.
2. **Infrastructure proposal.** Biden agreed on an infrastructure package with a bipartisan group of Senators. The infrastructure offers less than Biden wanted in climate-related funding, but the amount was still significant. The package includes $73 billion to expand and modernize electricity transmission, which is key to expanding renewable energy production. It also includes $7.5 billion for electric buses and transit and another $7.5 billion for electric vehicle charging stations. Moving the proposal through Congress will be tricky, but at least this is a start.
3. **Sustainable agriculture.** By an overwhelming margin, the Senate passed the Growing Climate Solutions Act. The bill is designed to make it easier for farmers and timber companies to sell carbon credits in emission trading markets such as California and Washington State. USDA will identify ways in which farms and timber companies can reduce their carbon emissions or sequester carbon. USDA will also create a third-party certification system to validate carbon credits. The bill to encourage participation by these rural interests in carbon reduction could shift the political balance in favor of climate action.
4. **Republican Climate Caucus.** About a quarter of House Republicans joined a new Conservative Climate Caucus, including the ranking members of the House Natural Resources, Energy and Commerce, and Select Climate Crisis committees. It's not clear whether they're actually prepared to support significant climate measures. But at the very least, this represents a big break with the climate denialism that has dominated the Republican Party. This may not represent a change of heart so much as a recognition that the party can't remain competitive in suburbs and swing states with unremitting opposition to climate action.

This cluster of actions is more notable when you consider that they all came in a single week. I do realize that these actions are modest when compared with the scale and urgency of the climate crisis. But in what has been a hyper-partisan deadlock over climate action, any signs of a thaw are welcome.