

Environment & Energy

California Risks Missing 2030 Climate Target, State Agency Says

By Zach Bright

Jan. 4, 2023, 5:01 PM

- Nonpartisan fiscal advisory agency assesses ambitious plan
 - Says lack of details harms plan's ability to serve as model
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California's climate plan "lacks a clear strategy" to make an ambitious statutory greenhouse gas emissions cut by 2030, a state agency report released Wednesday said.

The California Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) review said the state climate plan's lack of details has "major downsides" that could threaten "California's ability to serve as an effective model for other jurisdictions or demonstrate global leadership."

The nonpartisan office advised the Legislature on the state's amped up climate blueprint, which is designed to cut emissions by 48% by 2030. The state's air regulator, the California Air Resources Board, adopted the plan in December.

The LAO report said the plan's estimated reductions are driven primarily by assumptions developed by CARB "without specifying how those assumed outcomes might be achieved." It said that CARB failed to sufficiently specify important elements such as cost effectiveness.

The LAO report added CARB didn't address in detail how the state would employ financial incentives, sector-specific regulatory programs, or its cap-and-trade program to meet its goals. The cap-and-trade program lacks the stringency needed to attain the cuts mandated in the 2030 goal as well, according to the report..

To make that target, the LAO report recommended that the Legislature direct CARB to clarify its plans in a report by July 31 and strengthen its cap-and-trade program by limiting offsets and reducing future emissions allowances. The program sets an annually declining limit, or cap, on emissions from major sources and sets up a program of tradable emissions allowances.

CARB didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

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