

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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U.S.

## Big Companies Urge Biden, Congress to Address Climate Change

Amazon, Citigroup, Ford and others support a U.S. return to Paris accord from which Trump withdrew



A wildfire near the I-5 Freeway in Newhall, Calif., in October 2019.

PHOTO: MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/ASSOCIATED PRESS

By [Timothy Puko](#)

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WASHINGTON—A broad cross section of big U.S. corporations including [Amazon.com](#) Inc., [Citigroup](#) Inc. and [Ford Motor](#) Co. are calling on Congress to work closely with President-elect [Joe Biden](#) to address the threat of climate change.

In a letter to be sent to Congress and the Biden transition team on Wednesday, more than 40 companies say [they support the U.S. rejoining the Paris climate accord](#), and urge “President-elect Biden and the new Congress to work together to enact ambitious, durable, bipartisan climate solutions.”

The letter doesn’t detail any specific action plan or policy proposal, but it is the latest indication that [a significant cohort of corporate America is lining up with environmentalists](#) on climate change.





President Trump said the U.S. would withdraw from the Paris climate accord at the White House in 2017.

PHOTO: CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

[General Motors](#) Co. said last week that [it will no longer back the Trump administration's legal battle](#) to strip California's authority to set its own fuel-efficiency regulations.

Days before that, the American Farm Bureau Federation—[once one of the major opponents of climate legislation](#) in Congress—announced a new agribusiness coalition to promote federal support for cutting agricultural emissions.

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Companies are responding to pressure from both consumers [and their own workers](#) who are increasingly concerned about climate change. And they see a new president and Congress, [including some conservatives](#), putting a bigger emphasis on finding ways to avoid catastrophic outcomes from a warming Earth.

“Climate is going to be a much bigger deal in the next Congress because there is the prospect of something happening,” when previously there was none, said Stephen Harper, senior director of environment and energy policy for [Intel](#) Corp. , one of the signatories. “It’ll be smaller stuff, but hopefully it’ll be a patchwork of things that add up to make a difference.”

The letter was organized by the **Center for Climate and Energy Solutions**, or C2ES, an environmental group that works with businesses and governments. Several of the companies that signed it work with and help fund the group.

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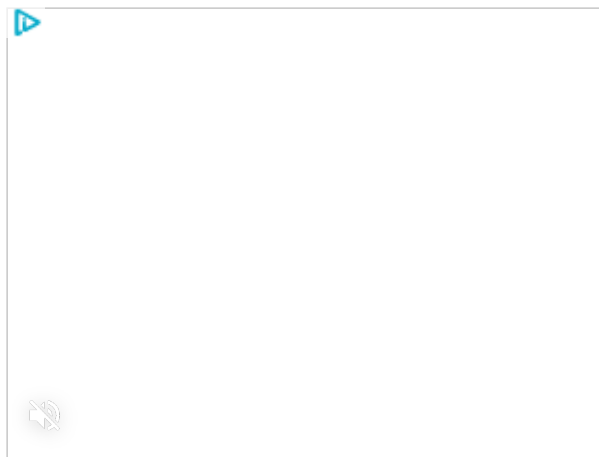
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*Should Congress heed the advice of corporate America regarding climate change? Why, or why not? Join the conversation below.*

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“The United States has made important strides—emissions are down, and clean energy is up,” the letter said. “With the election of a new President and Congress, we now have a critical opportunity to significantly strengthen these efforts.”

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The companies have warned of rising costs from climate-related disasters, and at times in Wednesday’s letter [echoed Mr. Biden’s own campaign](#),



saying that leveraging American investment and innovation to respond can itself boost the U.S. economy.

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Corporate momentum has been building in recent years on the need to address climate change. Several of the companies that signed the newest letter—including Ford, [International Business Machines](#) Corp. , [Unilever](#) and [Walmart](#) Inc. —[have already signed on to support taxing emissions](#) or have pledged to change their business practices to eliminate emissions from their own operations.



A coal-fired power plant in Utah last year. Some companies that signed on to Wednesday's letter already support taxing emissions.

PHOTO: GEORGE FREY/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Several of those companies hope that by vocally supporting new legislation, it gives Republicans cover to take action in collaboration with Democrats, Intel's Mr. Harper and others said. Mr. Biden's election may also help, making it easier for companies to take such a stance and to create a powerful collaboration with the White House to push Congress, said Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D., R.I.).

President Trump has worked to scale back many of the country's environmental regulations, and sometimes fumed at companies that didn't support his efforts. It is a sharp contrast to Mr. Biden, who has promised more regulation—of power plants, cars and oil and natural-gas producers—and to put the force of the full government behind addressing climate change.

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“Everyone has a sense that that’s where the game is being played. So you’re either engaged or irrelevant,” said Whit Fosburgh, chief executive of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership.

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Write to Timothy Puko at [tim.puko@wsj.com](mailto:tim.puko@wsj.com)

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