

# Congress and Climate

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Democratic Staff Director  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
United States Senate

# “What is past is prologue.”

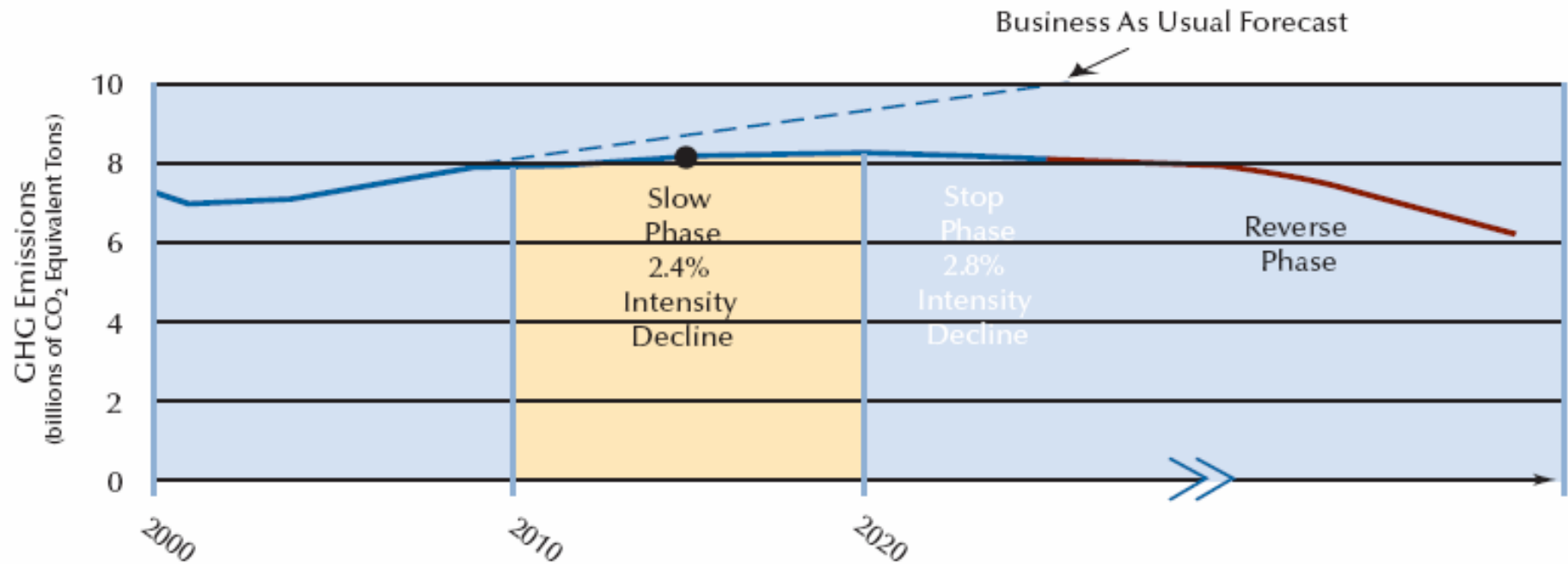
- ▶ Initial Legislation – Research Focus
  - National Climate Program Act (1978)
  - Global Change Research Act of 1990
- ▶ Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)
- ▶ Byrd-Hagel Resolution (1997)
- ▶ Legislation with Focus on Technology and International Deployment
  - Energy Policy Act of 1992
  - Energy Policy Act of 2005
- ▶ Senate Climate Resolution of 2005

# Sense of the Senate on Global Warming (53-46)

- ▶ "Congress should enact a comprehensive and effective national program of mandatory, market-based limits and incentives on emissions of greenhouse gases that slow, stop, and reverse the growth of such emissions at a rate and in a manner that –
  - (1) will not significantly harm the United States economy; and
  - (2) will encourage comparable action by other nations that are major trading partners and key contributors to global emissions."

## Commission Climate Proposal Timeline

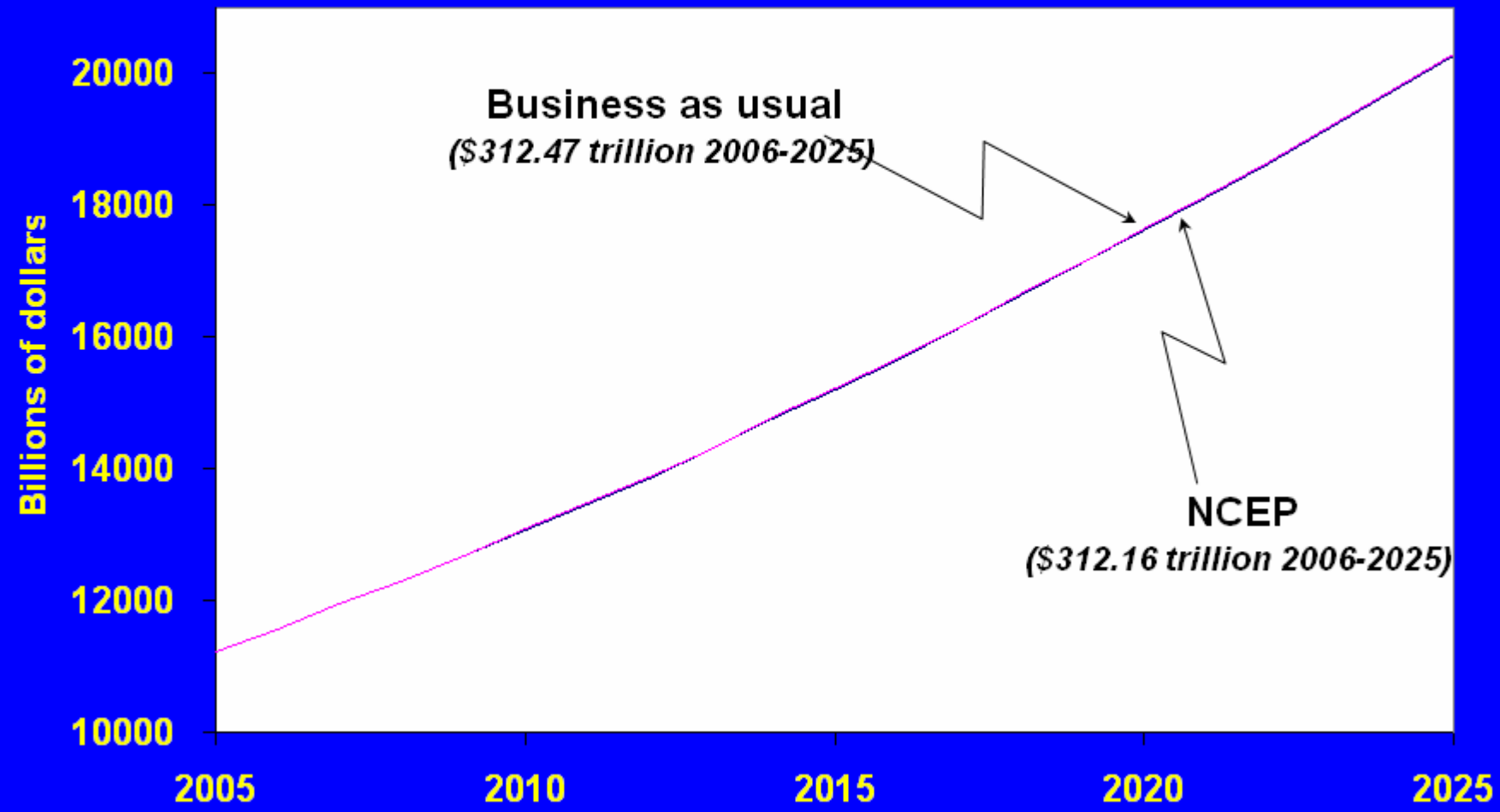
The Commission recommendation is to slow, stop, and eventually reverse emissions growth, through an intensity-based target, contingent on action by other countries.



● Determination that major U.S. trading partners and competitors have implemented measurable and effective climate policies

# "These changes do not material affect average economic growth rates for the 2003 to 2025 period"

– EIA Report page xi



# Developments Since Senate Resolution

- ▶ June 2005: Sense of the Senate Resolution (53-44).
- ▶ July-September: Energy Committee hearings on climate science and climate economics.
- ▶ Fall 2005: Committee participates in National Commission on Energy Policy workshops on how to design a regulatory system.
- ▶ February 2006: Sens. Domenici and Bingaman release White Paper on design features of a cap-and-trade system for greenhouse gases.
- ▶ March: Committee receives 150+ responses to White Paper.
- ▶ April: Committee convenes day-long Conference on design issues.
- ▶ June: Committee releases transcript and summary of Conference with conceptual direction of path forward.
- ▶ Summer-Fall 2006: Multiplicity of legislative proposals begin to circulate from Senators of both parties.

# Evolution Towards Cap-and-Trade

- ▶ Proposals that are adjuncts to “multi-pollutant” bills
  - S.2724 (Carper); H.R. 1873 (Bass)
- ▶ Proposals that principally focus on greenhouse gases
  - S.1151 (McCain-Lieberman)
  - S. Amdt. 868 (Bingaman)
  - S.4039 (Kerry-Snowe)

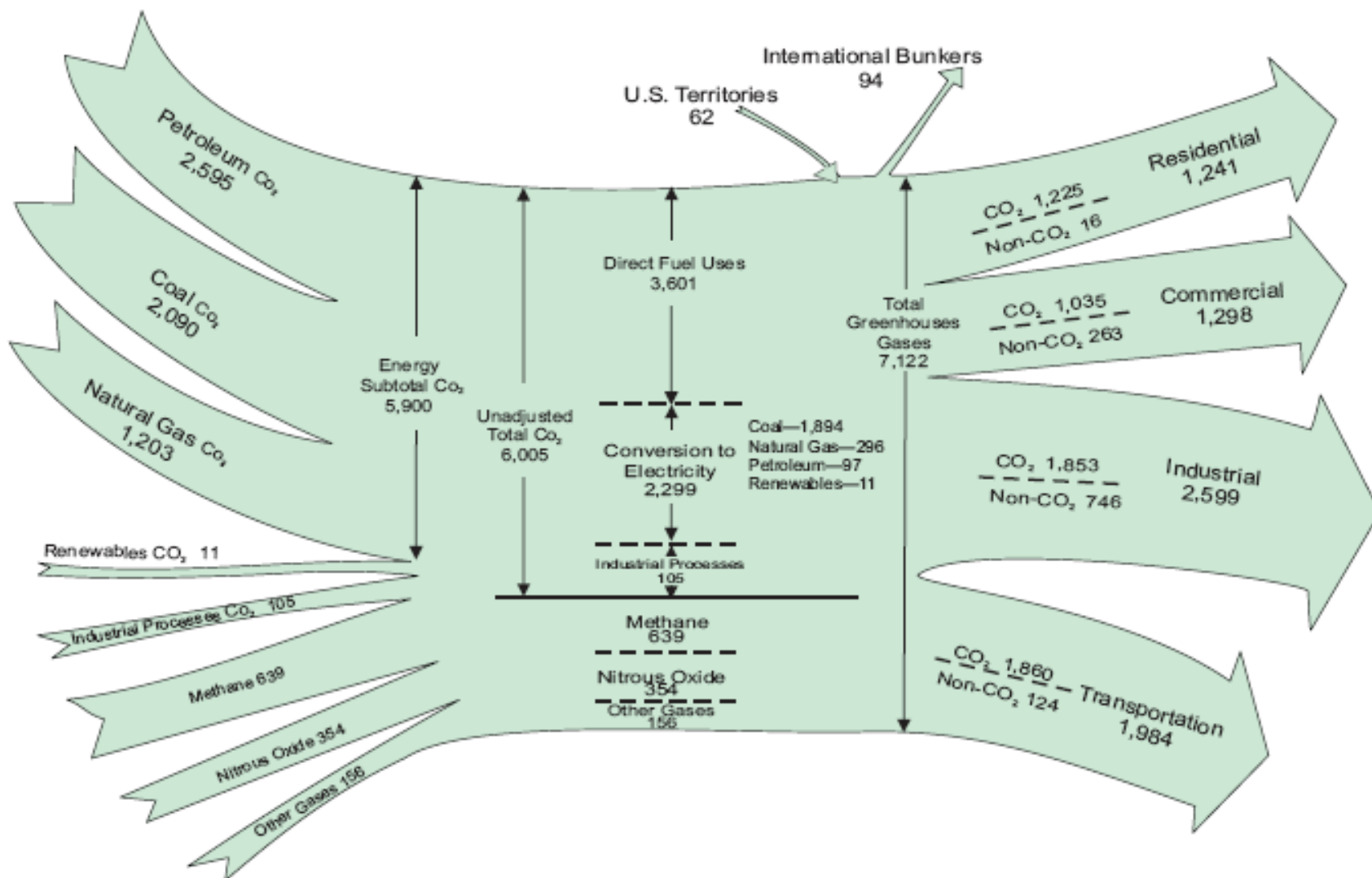
# Global Warming Legislation: Key Issues

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# Greenhouse Gas Emissions Flow, 2004

(million metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent)



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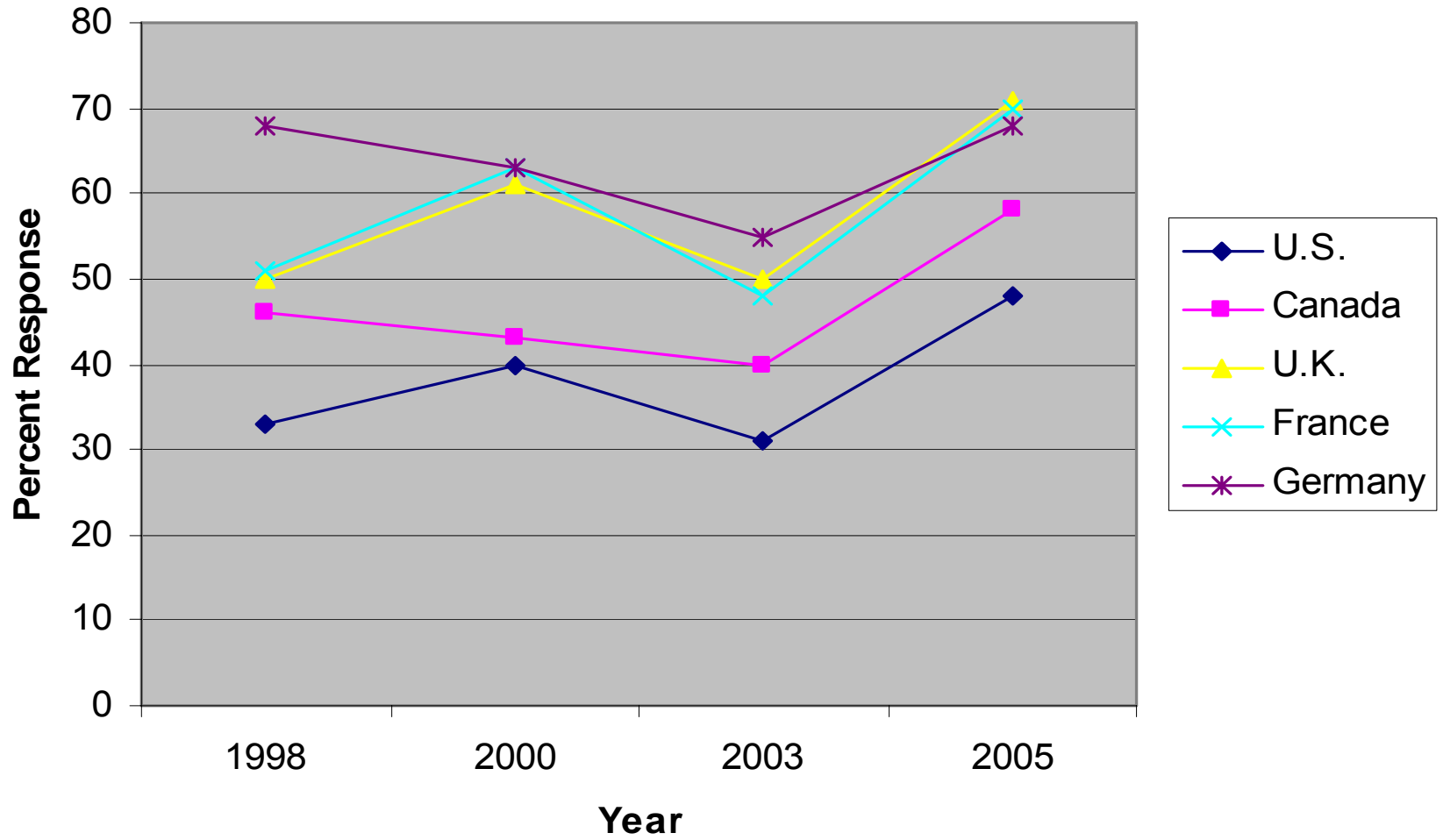
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- ▶ How should the implementation of a U.S. system factor in actions by other GHG emitters who are international economic competitors (e.g., China, India, Canada)?

# Outlook for the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress

- ▶ Changing public opinion



## Percent of Public Saying Global Warming Is a "Very Serious" Problem



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- ▶ Canada regresses