

Biden Announces Move to Ratify Kigali Amendment on HFCs

January 27, 2021 [Alex Hillbrand](#) [David Doniger](#)

Earlier today, by executive order, President Biden directed his administration to prepare to send the Kigali Amendment phasing down super-polluting hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) to the Senate for its advice and consent to U.S. ratification. The president's quick action on Kigali sends a powerful signal to the world that the U.S. will join the global effort to cut reliance on these dangerous gases and drive a deep domestic and international climate agenda as well.

The order formally directs the State Department to prepare a 'transmittal package' to the U.S. Senate for the Kigali Amendment, the first step of the U.S. ratification process, within 60 days.

The Kigali Amendment is a 2016 global pact under the Montreal Protocol to phase down climate-warming HFCs over the coming decades. Both Gina McCarthy and John Kerry helped negotiate the agreement, which the U.S. signed in 2016 but has not yet ratified. Amendments to the Montreal Protocol typically require the Senate's 'advice and consent' to ratification, making today's announcement a key step towards bringing the U.S. properly into the agreement.

The Biden administration's move shows how serious it is about achieving the massive climate benefits the Kigali Amendment can deliver. Kigali implementation worldwide can avoid HFC use equivalent to as much as 70 billion tons of carbon dioxide between now and 2050 and can prevent up to one half a degree Celsius of climate warming over this century.

The passage of the [bipartisan American Innovation and Manufacturing Act](#) at the end of the last Congress equips the administration with comprehensive authority to carry out the HFC phasedown in the United States. NRDC and our partners plan to be there each step of the way to make sure EPA and other agencies move as quickly and ambitiously as they can to reduce U.S. HFC by 85% over 15 years, as Kigali requires, or more.

Once the State Department submits the transmittal package, it will fall to the U.S. Senate to determine whether to move forward with Kigali ratification. The prospects seem bright: in 2018 thirteen Republican Senators sent a [letter](#) to President Trump expressing support for ratifying the Kigali amendment and noting its economic benefits for the United States. And more than 17 GOP Senators cosponsored the AIM Act, along with essentially all Democrats. Like the original Montreal Protocol and subsequent amendments, there is every reason to expect bipartisan support for Kigali ratification. Congress has also repeatedly appropriated funds to support the Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund, which assists

developing countries in their implementation. The continuation of this support will be essential to achieving Kigali's potential benefits.

More than 120 nations have already ratified the Kigali Amendment. U.S. ratification will pave the way for similar action by China, India, and other major economies already moving forward on domestic action but which have yet to ratify. Several of these countries were understandably waiting for a signal that the U.S. would move forward under the agreement; the U.S. was a top proponent of a global HFC phasedown in the years leading up to the Kigali Amendment and its continued leadership couldn't be more important.

The Biden team deserves applause for moving quickly on HFCs. It's time now to recommit, in the U.S. and around the globe, to the Kigali Amendment once again and embark as fast as we can on the transition to a world beyond HFCs.