

— TOP TAKEAWAYS —

# Innovating Our Way to a Cleaner Environment

## THE UNITED STATES IS A LEADER IN CREATING A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

- Americans have commuted less in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic. But even absent this trend, U.S. emissions have decreased dramatically down to around their **1980 levels** thanks to a combination of renewable energy and cleaner traditional energy sources.
- This is the **largest absolute decline** among all countries since 2000.
- The United States has also worked to “clean up” more **traditional power sources** with the result that power plants have much reduced emissions of mercury, sulfur dioxide and nitrous oxide.

## U.S. INNOVATION HAS LED TO A BURGEONING ENERGY SECTOR

- Between the development of **fracking** and **carbon capture and storage**, the U.S. has been able to provide cheap, reliable energy while continuing to reduce emissions.
- The renewable energy sector has taken off as well, with hydropower producing about **6.3 percent** of total electricity, wind **7.2 percent**, and solar **2.4 percent** while energy storage (important for these renewables) has seen an **18-fold increase** in capacity.
- Nuclear power has improved with small modular reactors and microreactors.

## WE SHOULD CONTINUE OUR BALANCED APPROACH TO CLEAN ENERGY

- Innovation, which will enable energy sources to become more reliable, efficient and affordable, is the real key to progress in making our energy supply cleaner and reducing our carbon footprint.
- Extreme climate policies stifle innovation with excessive regulations while making energy less reliable and less affordable, especially for low-income individuals.
- Our energy policies should prioritize creating a reliable and efficient energy supply while integrating cleaner energy technologies.

Click [here](#) to read the full policy focus and learn more about American innovation in the energy sector.