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Introduce Climate Change Adaptation Legislation  
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## Senators Introduce Climate Change Adaptation Le

### Planning Will Reduce Long-Term Costs for Natural Resource Agencies

November 16, 2011

Washington, DC – With incidents of prolonged drought, rising sea levels, and flooding on the rise, U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW), introduced a bill today to require federal natural resource agencies to plan for the projected long-term effects of climate change, and encourage states to prepare natural resources adaptation plans. The Safeguarding America's Future and Environment Act (SAFE) Act also would create a science advisory board to ensure that the planning uses the best available science. The legislation is cosponsored by Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT), also a member of EPW.

"From the warming waters of Narragansett Bay, to a rising coastline, to increased storms and rain, Rhode Island has already begun to feel the effects of climate change," said Whitehouse. "Preparing for climatic shifts in Rhode Island, and across the nation, is important to preserve the natural resources that are such a vital driver of our Rhode Island economy."

The SAFE Act would establish planning requirements and identify specific federal programs through which natural resource adaptation would be undertaken. The proposed legislation would require the development of a coordinated national adaptation strategy. It would also encourage, but not require, state-specific adaptation plans. This planning would help government agencies reduce their long-term costs by determining how to most effectively protect and conserve our country's natural resources in a changing climate. Rhode Island has already undertaken such an effort by creating a Climate Change Commission to prepare for a changing climate within the state.

The proposal has garnered broad support from sportsmen, outdoor industry, and conservation groups, including the American Canoe Association, American Rivers, American Whitewater, Conservation Law Foundation, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthjustice, Endangered Species Coalition, League of Conservation Voters, National Parks Conservation Association, National Wildlife Federation, Outdoor Alliance, Outdoor Industry Association, Restore America's Estuaries, Sierra Club, The Trust for Public Land, The Wilderness Society, Trout Unlimited, Wildlife Conservation Society, Winter Wildlands Alliance, and World Wildlife Fund.

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