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NATIONAL DESK

California Bill Calls for Cuts In Emissions

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California may become the first state to impose limits on the emissions of all greenhouse gases, under legislation introduced yesterday in the State Assembly.

The bill requires that emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases linked to global warming be reduced by 145 million tons, or 25 percent less than the current forecast, by 2020. That would bring the emissions back to the 1990 level.

The gases in question are produced when fossil fuels are burned, whether in motor vehicles, power plants or other industrial facilities. Many scientists have linked the growing concentration of these gases in the atmosphere to an observed increase in surface temperatures.

The bill, which was introduced by the Assembly speaker, Fabian Núñez, Democrat of Los Angeles, also requires the California Air Resources Board to set up a mandatory emissions reporting and tracking system to ensure compliance with the limits, which many of the state's business leaders have opposed.

The legislation could have more than a statewide impact, because California has traditionally led the nation in pollution-control efforts. Standards and rules established by the air control board have often been emulated by other states.

"As California goes, so goes the rest of the world," said Fran Pavley, a Democratic Assembly member and a co-sponsor of the bill. "As California leads and innovates, we believe that Congress and other states will also implement economywide clean energy standards."

The sponsors of the bill said its emissions limits were in line with goals established last summer by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, a Republican, in an executive order.

"The speaker said this bill was his top legislative priority this year," said Craig Noble, a spokesman for the Natural Resources Defense Council, a group that is supporting the bill. "The governor has said he wants to reduce emissions. That means we have a very good chance of getting a first law in the nation to set statewide limits on emissions."

That could mean a greater reliance on solar and wind-generated energy. Mr. Schwarzenegger also has been promoting the use of hydrogen as an automotive fuel.