With a new Congress and new administration settling in, Washington will undoubtedly have a different look and feel in 2021. Throughout his campaign, President Joe Biden signaled that addressing climate change will be a priority, and he promised to push policies that move the country toward achieving net-zero carbon emissions from the power sector by 2035, and economy-wide by 2050.

But Congress may have other ideas. A severely diminished Democratic majority in the U.S. House of Representatives and a narrowly divided Senate present a challenging federal landscape that the Biden administration team will need to navigate. Attempting to take action without Congress may be in the cards for our new president, as a key trend of the modern presidency has been the increased use of executive orders.

The new administration is likely to focus on rolling back many of President Trump’s actions on energy and climate, replacing them with new, ambitious orders focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions with an emphasis on “environmental justice.” Other top priorities, including the economy and healthcare, are likely to take precedence over sweeping legislative action to combat climate change.

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**KEY CABINET MEMBERS**

**USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack**
- U.S. Dairy Export Council president and CEO, 2017-2020
- USDA secretary, 2009-2017
- Iowa governor, 1999-2007
- Strong supporter of ethanol and other renewable fuels

**EPA Administrator Michael Regan**
- NC Department of Environmental Quality secretary, 2017-2020
- Environmental Defense Fund, various roles, 2012-2016
- EPA staff on air quality and energy issues, 1998-2008

**Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm**
- Michigan governor, 2003-2011
- Has previously supported renewable fuels
- Deeply knowledgeable about auto industry
“The Renewable Fuel Standard marks our bond with our farmers and our commitment to a thriving rural economy. ... A Biden-Harris Administration will promote and advance renewable energy, ethanol, and other biofuels to help rural America and our nation’s farmers, and will honor the critical role the renewable fuel industry plays in supporting the rural economy and the leadership role American agriculture will play in our fight against climate change.”

— Presidential candidate Joe Biden, August 2020