

Obama “confident” of bill passage through Senate

US President Barack Obama has praised the leaders of the House of Representatives for helping to pass the Waxman-Markey energy and climate change bill and says he is “confident” the Senate will pass similar legislation that would make sharp cuts in US greenhouse gas emissions. The legislation passed the House on a 219-212 vote late Friday. The narrow near party-line vote gives Obama a victory in a top legislative priority- climate change. Obama says responsibility now falls on the Senate to deliver later this year. “I am confident that they, too, will choose to move this country forward,” Obama says. “This bill will create new businesses, new industries, and millions of new jobs, all without imposing untenable new burdens on the American people or America’s businesses.” In recent days, Obama has stepped up his support for the bill but has also raised concerns about certain provisions. Obama says he opposes language in the House bill that would, beginning in 2020, impose a tariff on a number of goods such as steel, aluminium and cement coming into the US from other countries, such as China and India, that do not have greenhouse gas emissions caps. “I think we’re going to have to do a careful analysis to determine whether the... tariffs are necessary, given all the other stuff that was done and had been negotiated on behalf of energy-intensive industries,” Obama says, adding that key “regional differences” bridged during the House debate would provide a template for Senate action.

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