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On February 8, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY-14) and Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) introduced a resolution proposing an economic stimulus program known as the Green New Deal.

The Green New Deal resolution (H.Res. 109/S.Res. 59) calls for a complete overhaul of U.S. energy production infrastructure and proposes a goal for meeting the nation's energy demand with 100 percent renewable sources by 2030. The resolution declares that the federal government should take a stronger position on issues from maximizing energy efficiency to providing U.S. citizens with clean air and water, climate and community resilience, healthy food, access to nature, and a sustainable environment.

The resolution also states that the U.S. must take a leading role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This notion is particularly contentious for some, including President Donald Trump, who withdrew the United States from the Paris Climate Accord in 2017 citing its impacts on U.S. private industry. Ocasio-Cortez conversely believes that the Green New Deal stands to revitalize the economy while also making the U.S. energy sector more sustainable and empowering marginalized communities.

According to Ocasio-Cortez, "climate change and our environmental challenges are the biggest existential threats to our way of life. We must be as ambitious and innovative in our solutions as possible." Her timeline for the Green New Deal includes a revival of the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming in the House, which would be tasked with producing an initial draft of the plan by January 1, 2020, and finalizing draft legislation by March 1, 2020.

Critics of the proposal are adamant that there is no clear plan for initiating such a comprehensive clean energy transition.

Representative Francis Rooney (R-FL-19), the Republican co-chair of the Climate Solutions Caucus, derided the resolution for its lack of details and for diverting attention from more potentially attainable measures like a carbon tax.

According to the New York Times, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-8) has no intention to bring the resolution in its current form to the floor for a vote. Representative Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ-3), who supports the proposal, said that "there's not unanimity" surrounding the Green New Deal, thus making it difficult to move forward.

In the Senate, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has expressed interest in bringing the Green New Deal to a vote, stating that "we'll give everybody an opportunity to go on record and see how they feel about the Green New Deal," which would force those who are still undecided to take a stance on the matter. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) has called this rush to vote on the deal a "political stunt." At present, a Senate vote has not yet been scheduled.

Sources: CNN; E&E News; The Hill; Library of Congress; The New York Times; The Washington Post.
