



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on September 22, 2022

U.S. Senate Ratifies Kigali Amendment, Handing More Sovereignty to the United Nations

The United States Senate voted on Wednesday to ratify the [Kigali Amendment](#) to the Montreal Protocol, further strengthening the United Nations at the expense of U.S. national sovereignty and advancing the Left's radical environmentalist agenda.

The Senate [voted 69-27](#) in favor of ratification, surpassing the two-thirds majority requirement for ratifying treaties as specified in [Article II, Section 2](#) of the U.S. Constitution. Every Democrat present voted in favor of the treaty, while [21 Republicans](#) joined them. Every senator who voted "nay" was a Republican.



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With the United States' ratification, it is the [138th country](#) to have [adopted](#) the Kigali Amendment. Originally agreed upon in 2016, the amendment to the 1987 Montreal Protocol [went into effect](#) on January 1, 2019. A binding international agreement, it requires countries to radically cut their hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) emissions in the name of combating climate change.

The Kigali Amendment, which the Obama administration [negotiated](#) and [celebrated](#), had been [blocked](#) from Senate ratification for several years. However, multiple establishment-leaning lobbying groups, including the Chamber of Commerce, [advocated](#) for ratification, and in 2020, Congress enacted domestic legislation allowing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate HFCs.

In a statement following the amendment's ratification, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer [said](#) that "Ratifying the Kigali Amendment, along with passing the [Inflation Reduction Act](#), is the strongest one-two punch against climate change any Congress has ever taken." President Joe Biden also praised the Senate's ratification, [stating](#), "The United States is back at the table leading the fight against climate change." Among other perceived benefits of the treaty, Biden said, it would allow the U.S. to "advance the global effort to combat the climate crisis."

Others disagreed. Senator John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), who voted against the amendment, [stated](#) that "We don't need to get entangled in another United Nations treaty."

As a United Nations treaty, the Kigali Amendment infringes upon U.S. national sovereignty. This treaty will allow the UN to dictate HFC environmental regulations in the United States — yet another abdication of sovereignty to global entities. Considering the UN's [pro-Marxist, anti-liberty](#) bent, such a situation will be detrimental to the U.S. Constitution and individual freedom. And under the treaty itself, nations that do not ratify it will face international economic [restrictions](#) beginning in 2033.

The Kigali Amendment will also harm the U.S. economy. HFCs are very [commonly](#) used in air conditioners and refrigerators. By phasing out HFCs, the cost of purchasing, maintaining, and repairing air conditioners and refrigerators will [increase significantly](#). This will hurt families and businesses at a



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time when inflation is already at historic levels.

Under the treaty, the United States and other Western countries are treated [most stringently](#), needing to reduce HFC emissions by 85 percent (compared to 2012 levels) by 2036. However, China and other “developing” countries will only need to reduce their emissions by 80 percent (compared to 2021 levels) by 2045. A small group of countries, including India, will have even more lenient requirements. Although the U.S. Senate [passed](#) an amendment to the Kigali Amendment requiring the federal government to seek China’s reclassification as a “developed” nation, this amendment is [mostly symbolic](#).

HFCs are not harmful to the environment. A 2015 study by NASA [found](#) that HFCs would decrease ozone by only 0.035% by 2050. There is absolutely no justification for any type of regulation, much less at the international level.

Ultimately, the Kigali Amendment is another surrender to the Left’s environmental agenda and the push toward a one-world government. Rather than further integrating the United States into the growing international bureaucracy, Congress would be wise to [fully withdraw](#) the U.S. from the United Nations and every associated organization.

To urge your U.S. representative and senators to Get US Out! of the United Nations by enacting the American Sovereignty Restoration Act, visit The John Birch Society’s legislative alert [here](#).



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