

Judge Suspends California Cap-And-Trade Program

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SAN FRANCISCO (AP) -- A judge has temporarily halted California's ambitious program to provide financial incentives for the state's largest polluters to cut their greenhouse gas emissions.

San Francisco Superior Court Judge Ernest Goldsmith ruled Friday that the state failed to properly consider alternatives to its so-called cap-and-trade program.

Goldsmith says the failure to consider alternatives violated state environmental law, so the California Air Resources Board must conduct further review before implementing the key piece of AB32, the state's landmark global warming law.

The board adopted the cap-and-trade plan in December.

Environmental groups brought the legal challenge because they say the program allows polluters primarily located in poor neighborhoods to keep polluting by buying "carbon credits" from projects located elsewhere.

A spokesman for the Air Resources Board says it will appeal the ruling.

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