answers." As Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning and Program Evaluation Susan F. Tierney reiterated to the House Energy and Commerce Committee, the Department was looking "first and most creatively at voluntary options, in which consumers, firms, States and localities, even Federal agencies, could choose for themselves whether and how to pursue emissions reductions in conjunction [with] their own private or institutional needs." Any inclination the administration might have had toward command and control solutions was further deflected when the Senate rejected the BTU tax. In addition, defeat of the tax complicated emissions stabilization. The BTU tax would have reduced emissions by 25 million metric tons. Projected emissions reductions for the enacted 4.3 cent-gasoline tax increase were only 4 million metric tons. The administration had to make up the difference in its emissions action plan.[261]

Two energy sectors carefully scrutinized by the administration as candidates for possible major reductions in emissions were transportation and the electric utility industry. Each contributed approximately a third of the total emissions of carbon dioxide, which accounted for over 95 percent of the Nation's greenhouse gas emissions. In the transportation sector, raising the corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standard was again considered. The administration concluded, however, that the auto industry, given the long lead times required, would not be able to implement greater fuel efficiency standards—and therefore reduce emissions—before the end of the decade. Greater short-term reductions in the electric utility industry seemed more promising. Department officials began meeting with executives from major electric utilities in an effort to reach an agreement on a voluntary program for reducing emissions. Utility executives, along with some in Congress, pressed for "joint implementation" projects under which utilities and other industries would receive emissions credits for projects undertaken in developing countries. Joint implementation, according to its promoters, would be much more cost effective than domestic efforts because emissions reductions overseas, where no previous attempts to reduce pollution had been made, could be achieved more readily. O'Leary personally opposed joint implementation, at least in the short term, noting that the Clinton Administration had made a commitment to achieve the goal using domestic reductions. The administration agreed and in the action plan called for the development of joint implementation only as a pilot program.[262]

Following a delay of several months, President Clinton and Vice President Gore on October 19 unveiled *The Climate Change Action Plan* at a White House ceremony. "In concert with all other nations, we simply must halt global warming," the President declared. "It is a threat to our health, to our ecology, and to our economy." The action plan emphasized voluntary cooperation by businesses and industries and consisted of nearly fifty individual initiatives, ranging from accelerating tree planting to developing fuel economy labels for tires. Energy efficiency and conservation measures counted for some 70 percent of the plan's anticipated emissions reductions. Government expenditures would be relatively modest. The action plan called for $1.9 billion in federal spending through the year 2000. The administration contended that the relatively small amount of federal money would leverage an estimated $60 billion in private investment in cost effective, energy saving actions.[263]

At a briefing following the White House ceremony, O'Leary stated that the Department would spend $222 million annually to implement the plan. "I fully expect to take that out of my own hide," the secretary noted. She did not specify which departmental programs would be cut to make room for the new initiatives. O'Leary also stressed the elective nature of the program, noting that "voluntary is not a dirty word." She warned, however, that the administration would consider stronger measures if voluntary actions were not forthcoming. "If this doesn't get it," she declared, "we'll go back and find out how to get it through mandates."[264]

Reaction to the emissions reduction plan was mixed. Business and industry, which had feared a command and control approach,