Expediting Water Projects
In an effort to boost water development and the maintenance of water projects on federal lands, the U.S. Interior Department has taken steps to make it easier to transfer water projects on federal land to users of the water.  

Fracking Safety Confirmed
A new study of natural gas production near two schools in Washington County, Pennsylvania finds no evidence emissions pose a health risk to the kids attending the schools.

House Passes Paris Return
In a move Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) called “a futile gesture,” the House of Representatives passed a bill to block President Donald Trump’s decision to take the United States out of the Paris climate agreement.

Dodgy Nat. Climate Assessment
Even the worst-case scenarios highlighted by the authors of the fourth National Climate Assessment would not justify outsized efforts to cut carbon dioxide emissions, because the purported harms from climate change in 2090 from rising greenhouse gas emissions are trivial.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Issues New Clean Air Rule

By H. Sterling Burnett
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it has formally replaced the prior administration’s Clean Power Plan (CPP) with the Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule, which EPA proposed as a CPP replacement last August.

CPP Costs
CPP was the centerpiece of President Barack Obama’s climate change policies, requiring states to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants by 32 percent below 2005 levels by 2030, on average.

Under CPP, states would have had to force utilities to shutter dozens of coal-powered electricity plants prematurely and replace them primarily with wind and solar power generating

Liberal Party Unexpectedly Wins Australian Elections Focused on Climate Change

By H. Sterling Burnett
Defying the press, the pundits, the pollsters, and the punters (betrors), a coalition of two of Australia’s right-of-center parties—the Liberal Party and the National Party—won the national election, emerging with more seats in Parliament than they had before the elections.
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Climate Models Overstate Temperature Impact of Carbon Dioxide, Study Confirms

By Bonner R. Cohen

A new study demonstrates climate models consistently overstate the warming effect of increasing carbon dioxide concentrations on climate.

Researchers have long known there were significant discrepancies between the projections of climate models, based on assumptions about the effect of manmade emissions of greenhouse gases on global temperatures when compared to actual climatological observations, yet modelers and those who rely on them have not acted to correct the problems with the models, the study states.

“[T]he models are warming too fast,” writes John Christy, Ph.D., director of the Earth System Science Center and distinguished professor of atmospheric sciences and Alabama State Climatologist at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, in the study.

Difference of Degrees

At issue are the models’ assumptions about the climate’s response to the emission of extra greenhouse gases as a result of combustion of fossil fuels. The goal is to know the impact on the climate of the extra carbon dioxide we have added to the atmosphere, Christy writes.

In the early 1990s, most climate modelers developed models projecting a 0.35 degree Celsius rise in temperature per decade.

Christy says he and colleague Dick McNider, Ph.D. were skeptical about that projection. They didn’t trust the surface temperature databases because there were no measurements for much of the Earth and because the measurements that had been taken had serious inconsistencies in the ways temperatures were recorded and discrepancies with the locations where they were recorded over time.

Using satellite readings, available since 1979, and after factoring in variables such as volcanic eruptions, in 1994 Christy and McNider projected the amount of carbon dioxide being added to the atmosphere should cause the Earth to warm, on average, by about 0.09 degrees Celsius per decade. That’s about one-quarter of the level projected by prevailing models used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and government agencies such as NASA.

Confirms Earlier Conclusion

In 2017, Christy and McNider repeated the exercise, using 37 and a half years of satellite measurements. After allowing for volcanic eruptions and the effects of El Niño, their latest projection was a warming of 0.095 degree C per decade, almost exactly what they had found in 1994.

“The warming trend we found suggests that we are having a relatively minor impact on global temperatures,” Christy wrote.

Models Still Misstate Warming

With the notable exception of a Russian model, almost all climate models still overstate carbon dioxide-induced warming, Christy says.

The Russian model assumes a much lower sensitivity to carbon dioxide than other models, with the result being its end-of-the-century temperature projections are closer to those made by Christy and much lower than those made by other climate models.

“The rest of them [climate models] are already falsified and their predictions for 2100 cannot be trusted,” Christy wrote.

That models do not accurately reflect real-world temperature measurements has been known for years, Christy writes, citing a 2001 report by the National Academy of Sciences that states, “A more definitive reconciliation of modeling observed temperature changes awaits improvements of the models used to simulate the atmospheric responses to the natural and human induced forces.”

Those improvements have not taken place, Christy says, and IPCC has gone to extraordinary lengths to avoid drawing attention to the problem.

‘No Appetite for Correction’

The difference between actual temperatures and model projections is actually getting worse over time, says David Wojick, Ph.D., a senior science policy advisor with the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (CFACT).

“Unfortunately, the new models are even hotter than the old ones, so the clear failings Christy has—thankfully—identified are increasing, not decreasing,” Wojick said. “The modeling community has no appetite for correction.”

Because climate models have many weaknesses, they are constantly tweaked to correspond to actual temperatures, says Richard Lindzen, Ph.D., professor emeritus in the Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

“The issue of whether the models are exaggerating the increase in global mean temperature anomaly has been around for quite a long while,” Lindzen said. “Models are modified to replicate this [actual temperatures] after the fact.

“This ignores the numerous other problems with the models—many of them far more relevant to practical projections,” Lindzen said.

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcohen@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research and a senior policy analyst with CFACt.
The U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) has identified the steps it is taking to improve transparency and public input for legal settlements it is considering.

A memo from Daniel Jorjani, principal deputy solicitor at DOI, explains what the department is doing to institute then-Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s 2018 directive to stop entering into secret “sue-and-settle” agreements.

**Regulatory Shortcut**

Environmental lobbyists often sue various agencies, including DOI, to force them to implement policies they favor without going through the normally required regulatory process.

Under previous presidential administrations, federal agencies have often agreed to legally binding settlement agreements or consent decrees, creating priorities and rules and establishing timelines for action outside of the normal rulemaking process.

When an agency is developing a new regulation, it is required to estimate the purported benefits and potential costs of the proposal, hold hearings on it, provide public notice of the rule, allow a public comment period, and solicit the input of states and local governments to be affected by the rule. Sue-and-settle agreements evade all these procedural steps, with the agency relinquishing discretion over timelines and actions in ways that often shift its duties and priorities.

Sue-and-settle agreements are developed behind closed doors, absent any public input, and they can impose substantial payouts of taxpayer money to the interest group or groups bringing the lawsuit. The DOI reports between January 1, 2012 and January 19, 2017, Interior entered into more than 460 settlement agreements and consent decrees, resulting in the payment of more than $4.4 billion to plaintiffs, while keeping key provisions of these agreements secret.

**New DOI Rules**

DOI Order 3368 from September 2018 requires the department to file public notice of all litigation and proposed settlement agreements or consent decrees in the Federal Register. Another provision requires DOI to establish a process for public input before it approves a settlement with significant policy implications or large payouts.

In addition, as Jorjani announced in his May 15 memo, DOI launched a publicly accessible, searchable, “Litigation” webpage. Entries on this page will include the names of the parties involved in litigation, the case number, the date filed, the court where the complaint was filed, the statutory or regulatory provisions at issue in the complaint, the details of any attorney fees or costs paid or proposed to be paid, including the name(s) of the party or parties to whom any payment is to be made, and a link to the text of the decree or agreement. The webpage went live in mid-June.

‘Thoroughly Corrupt Practice’

Ending sue-and-settle agreements will prevent environmental lobbyists from acting as rogue, extralegal regulators, says Bonner Cohen, Ph.D., a senior fellow with the National Center for Public Policy Research.

“Cozy, behind-closed-doors, sue-and-settle arrangements between green groups and friendly federal regulators have been business as usual for decades,” Cohen said. “In this way, environmental groups can force regulators to take actions Congress would likely never sanction them to do.

“The arrangement has allowed environmental groups to line their pockets with taxpayer money, while enabling them to become extra-governmental regulatory entities, because their agenda becomes cemented into the legally binding settlements they reach,” Cohen said. “It’s good that under President Trump DOI is pulling the plug on this thoroughly corrupt practice.”

Duggan Flanakin (dflanakin@gmail.com) writes from Austin, Texas.
Interior Department Acts to Expedite Some Federal Facility Title Transfers

By Duggan Flanakin

Interior Secretary David Bernhardt took two actions to make it easier to transfer ownership of some federal facilities and water projects to those who use them.

The Department of Interior’s (DOI) move responds to directives of President Donald Trump and Congress to update its standards for determining which activities qualify for categorical exclusions and to streamline the Bureau of Reclamation’s (BuRec) title transfer process to allow more actions to go forward without specific authorizing legislation from Congress.

**Incentivizing Water Development**

BuRec has issued title transfer authorizations for 33 facilities and water development projects since the mid-1990s as a result of specific laws authorizing the transfers.

Trump directed the DOI to streamline title transfer activities in his fiscal year 2020 budget request, and Congress took up the challenge in March 2019 by passing S. 47, the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (Dingell Act) to encourage water project development by streamlining title transfers and issuing more categorical exclusions.

**Taxpayer Benefits Cited**

Categorical exclusions allow actions to be undertaken that a federal agency, in consultation with the President’s Council on Environmental Quality, has determined do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on human health or the environment and, as a result, do not require an environmental assessment or formal environmental impact statement. Title transfers normally require environmental impact assessments, an often lengthy and expensive process that Congress expressed concern was discouraging the development of valuable water projects on federal lands.

“This limited conveyance of federal Reclamation projects or facilities, such as diversion dams, canals, laterals, and other water-related facilities, benefits local water beneficiaries who will have greater autonomy and flexibility in managing these facilities,” DOI’s May 22 press release stated. “Local ownership can also provide financial collateral for capital improvements that could be made at these transferred facilities. Ultimately, the American taxpayer benefits from the eligible transfers covered under these actions since divestiture decreases federal liability.”

“This new title transfer process embodies the President’s goals of streamlining bureaucratic processes and making our government more efficient and accountable,” Bernhardt said in DOI’s press release. “Title transfers are a win for local communities and a win for the American taxpayer.

“The Department looks forward to continuing our work with local water users to reduce title transfer costs [and] stimulate infrastructure investment through local ownership with the bottom line goal of making this new streamlined approach a major success,” Bernhardt said.

**‘Make the Desert Bloom’**

The DOI’s expansion of projects qualifying for categorical exclusions comes in response to Title VIII of the Dingell Act, which allows BuRec to transfer title of entire classes of facilities that no longer require case-by-case authorizing legislation at the end of the process.

DOI’s actions will help the agency meet its original purpose, says economist P. J. Hill, Ph.D., a senior fellow at the Property and Environment Research Center.

“Congress created the Bureau of Reclamation in 1902 as a national effort to make the desert bloom, and irrigation from reclamation projects remains an important part of agriculture in the western United States,” Hill said. “Today, Reclamation manages 492 dams and 338 reservoirs in 17 western states that together irrigate more than 11 million acres.

“The original intent was, once the capital costs of an irrigation project were repaid to the federal government, ownership was to revert to the water users,” Hill said. “Each transfer, however, requires an act of Congress, and the process of securing such approvals has proven long and cumbersome.”

**Allowing Better Resource Use**

Hill says making the title transfer process more efficient should improve the outcomes for the government and water users alike.

“Canals, dams, and irrigation and pumping facilities require ongoing upkeep the government hasn’t kept up with, so BuRec has a large maintenance backlog,” Hill said. “By conveying title to, for instance, local irrigation groups, they could sell bonds to finance improvements, but currently lack of ownership prevents them from using irrigation facilities as collateral.”

DOI’s reforms could also encourage valuable water transfers, says Hill.

“Finally, all parties might benefit from locally controlled water realoca-

*By Duggan Flanakin (dflanakin@gmail.com) writes from Austin, Texas.*
Liberal Party Unexpectedly Wins Australian Elections Focused on Climate Change

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in 2012, and for ousting the previous Liberal prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull, over his pledge to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 26 percent by 2030 in order to meet Australia’s obligations under the Paris climate agreement.

After replacing Turnbull as Prime Minister in August of 2018, Morrison recommitted his party to expanding the mining of coal for domestic use and export.

Polls Predicted Labor Landslide

Labor made Australia’s energy and climate the main issue in the election, promising to raise government revenue through policies meant to curb greenhouse gas emissions, even while acknowledging the proposals would increase energy costs and result in job losses.

Shortly before the election, Labor and its partners sent protestors to the site of a proposed coal mine in Queensland. The locals, who favored opening the mine because of the jobs and economic growth it promised, gave the activists a rough welcome, refusing to serve them food or drinks and engaging in shoving matches with the anti-coal protestors.

Right up through Election Day, Labor seemed to be winning on the climate and energy issue, according to the polls. Australia’s federal election was universally held to be “unlosable” for the Labor Party—until the votes were counted.

More than 60 successive polls undertaken since the 2016 election indicated Labor would make big gains in Parliament and be in position to choose the Prime Minister. Even exit polls taken the day of the election indicated Labor would win 82 seats in the 151-member Parliament. Instead, Labor finished the election with 68 seats in Parliament, one less than it began the day with.

The Liberal/National coalition, which started the day with 74 seats in Parliament, ended up winning 77 seats, holding on to two open seats previously held by the coalition and picking up an additional seat over its prior total.

In Australia, voting is compulsory for qualified citizens.

Sure Thing Went Sour

The election had been considered such a lock for Labor that at least one big betting house, Sportsbet, paid out on a Labor win two days before the election in order to stop taking bets on it.

On May 16, Sportsbet tweeted, “We’ve paid out early on Labor to win the Federal Election. #ausvotes19 We thought we’d simply give them their cash early.”

Sportsbet’s mistake cost the company more than $1 million in payouts on the ultimately losing bet. The company then, of course, had to pay those who had bet the Liberal/National coalition would win, tweeting about its previous announcement and payout, “This didn’t age well...#ausvotes.”

Post-election results showed Labor lost more of the seats it had previously held in suburban and rural areas than it gained in Australia’s large cities and urban areas.

Former PM Lost Seat

Former Liberal Prime Minister Tony Abbott, an avowed climate skeptic, lost his seat in Parliament, where he had represented northern Sydney since 1994.

Abbott attributed his loss to a political realignment, saying an increasing political divide based on income levels, not climate change, was the reason for his loss.

“I think we can see that there is something of a realignment of politics going on right around this country,” said Abbott in his concession speech. “It’s clear that in what might be described as working seats, we are doing so much better. It’s also clear that in at least some of what might be described as wealthy seats, we are doing it tough and the Green Left is doing better.”

“[Let me just say ... where climate change is a moral issue we Liberals do it tough,” Abbott said. “Where climate change is an economic issue, as tonight shows, we do very, very well.”

‘Climate Is Always Changing’

The coalition formed by the Labor and Green parties in conjunction with the Australian activist group GetUp! should accept the election results and move on, says Viv Forbes, executive director of the Carbon Sense Coalition.

“The ALP-Greens-GetUp! alliance ran hard in Australia’s recent climate alarm election; they lost,” Forbes said. “So let us see no more anti-coal motorcades and street processions and more hard science education.

“The new government must also stop promotion of green energy with targets, subsidies, and carbon taxes, and focus on infrastructure catch-up,” Forbes said. “Climate is always changing, [and] government policies that assume continuous global warming expose our society and economy to huge risks for no measurable benefits.”

Jobs Trumped Climate

Jobs and the well-being of the economy proved to be more important to Australian voters than fears of climate change, says Tom Harris, executive director of the International Climate Science Coalition.

“Newspapers such as The Guardian Australia endorsed the Labor Party because of its candidates’ focus on climate change, and argued the climate emergency is the most pressing issue of our time. But many Australians did not go along, especially in Queensland, which is a big coal-mining state. Had Labor won Queensland, they would have formed the government. Instead, the incumbent minority coalition government, with its less extreme climate policies, won.”

TOM HARRIS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE SCIENCE COALITION

H. Sterling Burnett, Ph.D. (hsburnett@heartland.org) is a research fellow at The Heartland Institute.
The 13TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE (ICCC-13) will take place on Thursday, July 25, 2019, at Trump International Hotel in Washington, DC.

The event will feature the courageous men and women who spoke the truth about climate change during the height of the global warming scare. Now, many of them are advising the new administration or joining it in senior positions.

Climate realists have established beyond a reasonable doubt that the human impact on climate is likely to be very small and beneficial, rather than harmful. Realists have proven most scientists now share this opinion, except those who have made careers out of finding a human impact and exaggerating it.

Speakers at ICCC-13 will summarize the best available climate science and recommend which policy changes are needed for America to lead a post-alarmist world in climate realism. ICCC-13 will also feature timely, in-depth, expert discussions about the “Green New Deal” and the benefits of ending the Democrats’ war on fossil fuels.

Space is very limited, so reserve your conference pass and hotel room now. Admission is $129. To register or learn more about ICCC-13, visit heartland.org or call 312/377-4000.

The Heartland Institute is a national nonprofit organization based in Arlington Heights, IL. Its mission is to discover, develop, and promote free-market solutions to social and economic problems. For more information, visit our website at heartland.org or call 312/377-4000.
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Issues New Clean Air Rule

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facilities. The Energy Information Administration had projected CPP would result in $1.25 trillion in lost GDP (in 2014 dollars) between 2020 and 2030. Estimates indicated CPP would have increased electricity prices by 11 to 14 percent per year.

Successful Legal Challenges
CPP was beset by legal challenges from its introduction.

Twenty-seven states and dozens of business, consumer, labor, and public-interest groups sued to block the rule, arguing its limited benefits did not justify its high costs and that the rule violated states’ long-established authority under the U.S. Constitution to design and administer the electric power supply within their borders.

Legal scholars sided with the states, arguing CPP was illegal because the 1970 Clean Air Act (CAA) did not grant EPA authority to regulate “outside the fence” by dictating states’ electric power mixes, and unconstitutional because it ignored Fifth Amendment protections of property rights against unlawful takings and violated states’ and utilities’ rights to due process.

The CPP never went into effect. In a highly unusual move, the U.S. Supreme Court stayed the rule in February 2016, indicating the Court believed the legal challenge brought by the states was likely to be successful and the justices did not want to allow a regulation that could have such a profound effect on the economy to go forward until all legal proceedings were completed.

In October 2017, the Trump administration announced it would rescind CPP.

Focusing on Best Technologies
In August 2018, EPA unveiled the draft of its replacement for CPP, ACE, opening the plan up for public comment.

After some minor revisions, the agency finalized the rule on June 19.

Consistent with the CAA, ACE regulates inside the fence, setting unit-specific carbon dioxide emission goals which can be met through a flexible suite of six sets of technologies EPA has concluded are the Best System Emission Reduction technologies.

ACE directs states to work with the operators of coal-fueled power plants to establish the best technologies based on site-specific needs and conditions, to improve efficiency by increasing generating units’ heat rates, the amount of energy required to generate a unit of electricity. Improving a power plant’s heat rate reduces the amount of emissions for each unit of electricity generated.

ACE gives states three years to develop their implementation plans.

‘Affordable, Reliable Energy’
ACE keeps President Donald Trump’s promise to ensure the lowest-cost power while still protecting the environment, Wheeler said at the press event announcing the finalization of the ACE.

“Today, we are delivering on one of President Trump’s core priorities: ensuring the American public has access to affordable, reliable energy in a manner that continues our nation’s environmental progress,” Wheeler said. “Unlike the Clean Power Plan, ACE adheres to the Clean Air Act and gives states the regulatory certainty they need to continue to reduce emissions and provide a dependable, diverse supply of electricity that all Americans can afford.”

The Trump administration estimates ACE will result in energy, environmental, and public health benefits of $120 million to $730 million per year, when fully implemented.

Lawmakers Praise Change
ACE respects states’ expertise and provides flexibility CPP lacked, said Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY), chairman of the Senate Committee on Budget, in a joint EPA press release.

“I am glad the EPA is replacing the Clean Power Plan, which was designed to put coal out of business,” Enzi said. “States, not the federal government, are in the best position to set energy policies that work best for them.

“This rule helps to empower states and provide needed flexibility to move toward better energy production without causing economic harm,” Enzi said.

In the same press release, Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts thanked Trump for “rolling back the job killing” CPP which ignored progress his state has made in cleaning the air.

“The so-called Clean Power Plan ... gave Nebraska zero credit for innovative projects we already have in the pipeline, and it would have burdened Nebraska families and Main Street with budget-crushing power rate increases,” Ricketts said.

ACE follows the law and protects the energy supply, Rep. Louie Gohmert (TX-R) said in EPA’s press release.

“Today the EPA restored the rule of law by repealing the overreaching CPP and replacing it with the ACE Rule,” Gohmert said. “The Trump EPA rule that tracks the law will actually allow cheaper energy for the nation’s working poor while cleaning up the air and water to levels not experienced in many decades.”

‘Vast Improvement’
Inexpensive energy helps people live better, and ACE will help ensure they continue to have it, says Tim Benson, a policy analyst with The Heartland Institute, which publishes Environment & Climate News.

“Affordable energy is the key to the production of virtually all goods and services,” Benson said. “This finalized ACE ruling is a vast improvement over the CPP and by replacing it will save Americans around $400 million a year, making people’s lives easier.”

TIM BENSON
POLICY ANALYST
THE HEARTLAND INSTITUTE

INTERNET INFO

Examining Climate Change, Coal, and Environmental Protection in PA

By H. Sterling Burnett, Ph.D.

Both the Republican-led House and Senate in Pennsylvania have been very active on the climate issue this year, holding a number of hearings and workshops at which differing views on climate science and policy were discussed. Most recently, in early May your Senate Majority Policy Committee held a workshop on climate change. Why did you think this meeting was necessary, and what did you take away from the speakers’ presentations concerning the state of climate science?

Argall: We held this hearing at the request of Sen. Scott Martin from Lancaster County, who wanted to dive deeper into this issue. The purpose of this workshop was to fully understand the science and statistics behind climate change and to understand what we as state policymakers could do about it.

It was unfortunate, however, that many environmental groups and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection did not accept our invitation to participate. We could have had a more in-depth conversation about this issue, but we could not force groups to speak to us.

Burnett: Pennsylvania has by far the lowest electric power rates in the northeastern and New England region, reflecting the fact it is the one state in the region that is not a part of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), which is prematurely shuttering low-cost coal power plants. Gov. Tom Wolfe has suggested Pennsylvania join RGGI. Do you believe Pennsylvania should join RGGI?

Argall: In Harrisburg, we tend to find more consensus than our counterparts in Washington. Many in state government believe we can balance both our economic concerns and the need for environmental protection. The state constitution requires that we as state officials have an obligation to provide clean air and water to the citizens of Pennsylvania.

We also need to ensure that we protect Pennsylvania’s economy. The state has just earned the title as one of the largest energy producers in the country. We live in a world that needs to respect both our environmental and economic concerns. Any organization the state joins must come to terms with this reality.

Burnett: Unlike neighboring states, which have banned or sharply limited fracking and turned away from coal, Pennsylvania allows fracking, which has boosted its economy and state revenues. You’ve been a strong proponent of the coal industry. Why do you think coal continues to be vital to the energy system, and what is your opinion of efforts to ban fracking?

Argall: I recently received an award from the Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area for my work in helping to clean up our streams and rivers. Many have worked together on these efforts to improve the waterways in our small towns and large cities in the last 50 years.

Where we once saw—and smelled—contaminated black and orange rivers in the center of our local communities, today we see people boating and fishing in the same locations.

This is something of which we should all be proud. That progress is the result of balancing our environmental and economic concerns. For example, Sen. John Yudichak (D-Luzerne/Carbon) and I have proposed bipartisan legislation this session to assist waste coal facilities across Pennsylvania. These facilities generate electric power and eliminate the massive waste coal piles and abandoned strip mines that are a result of centuries of mining throughout Pennsylvania.

That should be our goal for the future—not banning new technologies and much-needed energy resources which have created the kinds of jobs that are so much needed in many regions in Pennsylvania.

I believe the state has an obligation to clean up our environment while at the same time encouraging key energy job creation and retention. It’s not an either/or choice. We have to do both!

H. Sterling Burnett, Ph.D. (hsburnett@heartland.org) is a research fellow at The Heartland Institute.

Editor’s Note: Pennsylvania state Sen. Dave Argall (R-Rush Township) has served in the legislature since 1985 and as a state senator since 2009. He is Chairman of the Senate Majority Policy Committee and serves on the Agriculture & Rural Affairs, Appropriations, Finance, and Community, Economic & Recreational Development committees and as vice-chair of the Urban Affairs & Housing Committee.
New Mexico Produces Record-Breaking Amounts of Oil and Gas

New Mexico produced nearly 246 million barrels of oil in 2018, up more than 40 percent from the previous year, setting a new record for oil production in the state.

New Mexico’s 2018 production is nearly three times as much as the 86 million barrels produced in the state in 2012, according to the state’s Oil Conservation Division (OCD).

The increased production is made possible by the use of hydraulic fracturing, horizontal drilling, and other technological advances which allow energy companies to access previously untapped shale oil reserves in the Permian Basin, which underlies much of New Mexico and West Texas, OCD reports.

Similarly, natural gas production in New Mexico increased by 13 percent last year, making the state’s production in 2018 the highest it has been since 2008.

The oil and gas industry has forecasted production will increase further in New Mexico in 2019.

‘No Signs of Abating’
The fracking boom in New Mexico has led to unprecedented production and prosperity in the state, says Paul J. Gessing, president of the Rio Grande Foundation.

“Thanks to fracking, oil production in New Mexico’s Permian Basin has tripled since 2012 and is expected to double again by 2021,” Gessing said. “This has led to massive budget surpluses in New Mexico, creating both direct and indirect jobs.”

PAUL J. GESSING, PRESIDENT, RIO GRANDE FOUNDATION

Good News, Looming Threats
The new production record in New Mexico is yet more good news from the fracking revolution, says Kenny Stein, director of policy for the Institute for Energy Research.

“These oil and gas production increases have produced a surge in jobs and economic growth for the state,” Stein said. “The royalties on this production are also money in the pockets of the landowners in the region, landowners including the state of New Mexico itself.

“The fracking boom leaves the state in the happy position of deciding what to do with the $1 billion-plus budget surplus which is a direct consequence of oil and gas development,” Stein said.

Stein says the state government may be taking actions that could harm its own and its residents’ pocketbooks.

“Given that New Mexico remains a relatively poor state, it is unfortunate the state government seems to want to look the oil and gas gift horse in the mouth by pursuing fantasies like 100 percent renewables goals,” Stein said. “Rather than driving up energy costs for its citizens through renewables mandates, the state government should embrace the prosperity sitting in the ground beneath them.”

Kenneth Artz (kennethcharlesartz@gmx.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.
House Bill to Reduce Wildfires Held Up by Committee Chair

By Duggan Flanakin

For the third year in a row, Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-AR), Congress’ only professional forester, has introduced the Resilient Federal Forests Act, to reduce the economic and environmental damage caused by wildfires and improve forest management.

Several provisions of the 2017 version of the bill were later signed into law as part of the omnibus budget and Farm Bill packages for that year. The legislation’s primary objective of providing federal land management agencies with immediate tools to increase the pace, scale, and efficient design and completion of forest management projects has yet to be realized, says Westerman.

Removing Wildfire Fuel

The Trump administration has argued poor management of federal forests is at least partly responsible for the severity of Western wildfires in recent years.

Westerman’s bill aims to reduce the severity, size, and cost of wildfires by streamlining environmental reviews in order to allow the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to more quickly conduct forest-thinning projects involving removal of dead trees, small trees, underbrush, and other fuel in dry federal forests. The bill would also limit lawsuits by environmental groups opposing forest thinning projects. Such lawsuits have often slowed or quashed forest management plans that included thinning.

The Resilient Federal Forests Act would create a new arbitration pilot program requiring those suing to provide an alternative proposal they would improve their management more quickly, says H. Sterling Burnett, a senior fellow with The Heartland Institute, which publishes Environment & Climate News.

“The best policy for freedom, for fiscal sanity, and for forest health would be for the U.S. government to sell most of its national forests and other federal lands to the private sector, be it individuals, companies, or nonprofit organizations,” Burnett said. “Private forests are managed for long-term sustainability, benefiting wildlife, owners’ pocketbooks, and the federal government by delivering tax revenue to the federal treasury.”

“However, because privatization is not a likely option at present, Westerman’s bill is a step in the right direction because it would limit lawsuits that prevent timely forest management,” Burnett said.

Calls for Funding Reform

Another good reform would be to change the incentives for federal forest managers, which this bill doesn’t do, says Randal O’Toole, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute.

“Today’s forest management is driven by fire policy more than it was ever driven by timber policy,” O’Toole said. “Thinnings and similar ‘fuel treatments’ would not be so bad if they earned a profit, but instead, the Forest Service loses money on them, requiring taxpayer subsidies to support them.

“The national forests would be better off if their managers were allowed to charge a full range of user fees and they were funded exclusively out of those fees,” O’Toole said. “Then managers would respond to on-the-ground needs, not to national political dynamics.”

Duggan Flanakin (dflanakin@gmail.com) writes from Austin, Texas.

‘Loved Our Trees to Death’

By letting nature take its course, as environmental lobbyists have encouraged through lobbying or have used lawsuits to force federal forest managers to do, activists have created unhealthy forests, Westerman said in a joint press release with other cosponsors of the bill.

“We have quite literally loved our trees to death,” Westerman said. “Years of mismanagement have led to insect infestation, overstocked stands, and dead and decaying trees.

“It’s time to allow the Forest Service to use proven scientific methods when managing our forests,” Westerman said.

In the group statement, cosponsor Rep. Greg Walden (R-OR) pointed out research shows active management can greatly reduce the harm from forest fires.

“Studies from the Nature Conservancy and Forest Service tell us that active forest management can reduce the size and intensity of wildfires by 70 percent,” Walden said. “We should follow the science on forest policy reform to improve forest health and reduce the risk of wildfire, and that’s exactly what this bill does.”

In addition to reducing wildfires, the Resilient Federal Forests Act would benefit wildlife- and timber-dependent communities, said Rep. Greg Gianforte (R-MT) in the statement.

“The bill makes critical reforms to prevent wildfires, improve reforestation efforts, promote collaboration at the local level, and end frivolous lawsuits as we know them,” Gianforte said. “These are commonsense reforms that will make our forests healthier, reduce the severity of our wildfires, improve wildlife habitat, and get our timber workers back to work.”

Committee Chair Says No

Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, said the bill was dead on arrival because it does not focus on fighting climate change.

The bill’s cosponsors universally rejected Grijalva’s claim, saying limiting forest fires reduces carbon dioxide emissions.

“Forests going up in flames and releasing tons of carbon into the atmosphere is not true conservation; pro-active, sound forest management is,” Westerman said in the press release.

Even supposing Grijalva’s climate concerns are well-founded, that’s no argument against this bill, says Rep. Paul Gosar (R-AZ).

“My colleagues on the other side of the aisle often exaggerate the impacts of carbon dioxide, but the facts are, the best way to sequester carbon is through healthy forests,” said Gosar in the group’s statement.

Suggests Selling Land

Privatizing at least some federal forests would improve their management more
Montana Utility Requests Solar Rate Change to Cover Costs

By Kelsey E. Hackem

Montana’s largest electric utility has requested a rate review for its net-metering residential customers.

Net metering allows residential and commercial customers who generate their own electricity, typically from rooftop solar panels, to sell any excess electricity they generate back to the utility, usually paid for in the form of a credit on their bill for any electricity they draw from the grid. States with net-metering laws often force utilities to pay retail rates for the electricity sold back to them by net-metering customers, instead of the wholesale rates they pay for electricity generated by other sources.

NorthWestern Energy (NorthWestern) reports there are approximately 2,100 net-metering customers on its system in Montana, mostly rooftop solar customers.

Give-and-Take

Net-metering systems provide energy to and take energy from the electric grid, requiring special equipment and additional costs, says Jo Dee Black, a spokesperson for NorthWestern.

“When a customer installs private generation, it changes the way that customer is using the energy grid,” Black said. “In Montana, the way it is working under the current system, a person with private generation, if they are hooked onto the grid and net-metering, if they generate more electricity than they can use they put that electricity back onto the grid and receive a credit for it.

“Later, if they don’t generate enough electricity, if they need more electricity than they are generating, they can pull electricity back from the grid and it is reflected on their bill as a credit if they had extra,” Black said.

Big Price Gap

In 2017, the Montana legislature directed NorthWestern to do a cost-benefit study of net-metering customers in the state. The study found NorthWestern was substantially overpaying its net-metering customers for the power they provide.

According to the report, the net value of the electric power that rooftop solar customers deliver to the grid when they are generating more power than they use is about 4 cents per kilowatt hour, which is just one-third of the retail rate at which net-metering customers are currently compensated.

To remove the discrepancy between the value of the electricity they provide and the price they are paid, and to account for the additional cost servicing net-metering customers add to the system, NorthWestern has asked state regulators to decrease the rate new residential net-metering customers will be credited for power, from about 11.4 cents per kilowatt hour to about 6.6 cents. NorthWestern is also asking regulators to approve a demand charge for net-metering customers, based on a customer’s demand as measured by a meter NorthWestern would install on buildings participating in net metering.

‘A Terrible Policy’

Net metering is bad economically and unfair to other customers, says Alexander Stevens, a policy analyst at the Institute for Energy Research.

“Net metering is a terrible policy, as it is essentially an indirect subsidy for distributed generation, usually rooftop solar,” Stevens said. “Utilities frequently end up paying more for electricity from net-metering customers than they would if they were to purchase wholesale electricity from power plants.

“The retail rates solar customers are being paid include not only the cost of producing the electricity but also the costs of planning, building, and operating the electrical grid, yet they are not paying the utility for the use of the grid and accompanying costs associated with dumping their excess electricity on it,” Stevens said. “The costs net-metering customers impose on the system are then shifted onto all of the other ratepayers, yet a 2018 Berkeley National Laboratory report found the average adopter of rooftop solar had an income 50 percent higher than people who do not install rooftop solar.”

To End Cost-Shifting

The goal of NorthWestern’s rate case is for the payments to reflect the true cost each customer imposes on the system, making the rates equitable for all customers, says Black.

“The costs associated with maintaining the energy grid are fixed,” Black said. “The way net meters use the grid imposes different costs on the system than those without net metering.

“Because of the way rates are presently structured, NorthWestern Energy Montana customers who net-meter are paying only 65 percent of the cost to allow them to interact with the energy grid,” Black said. “Under the current rate, these costs are shifted to other customers, while the rate we’ve proposed going forward would better ensure each class of customer is paying more of the true cost of service.”

‘Adopt Retail Choice’

NorthWestern’s proposal would be good for the great majority of Montana’s energy users, Stevens says.

“The proposed change will likely make investing in rooftop solar less attractive in Montana because it would require rooftop solar customers to pay the costs of allowing them to dump their excess electricity on the grid,” Stevens said. “This is great news for customers without rooftop solar, because it means, going forward, new producers of rooftop solar will not be able to pass those costs on to them.”

Stevens says opening up the electric power market to competition is an approach Montana could take that would do more to reduce residents’ and businesses’ energy costs.

“If Montana were to adopt retail choice in their electricity markets, it would sort of solve this problem because then people could just choose to purchase electricity from different providers, who would compete based on price, among other factors,” Stevens said.

Kelsey E. Hackem writes from Washington.
By H. Sterling Burnett

A two-year analysis by the environmental risk consulting firm Gradient finds emissions from the Yonker natural gas hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) well site, located near one elementary school and one combined junior/senior high school in Washington County, Pennsylvania, pose no health risk to students attending the schools.

The wells in question are located approximately 900 yards from the schools. National and local environmental activists have long targeted the Yonker well site for closure, claiming it is harming students’ health.

No Increase in Pollution

The Gradient study concludes these claims are false and natural gas production at the site is not hurting the children’s health.

“Our air quality and public health evaluation of December 2016 to October 2018 ambient air quality data collected at three sites in proximity to the Yonker well pad in Mount Pleasant Township showed that measured [particulate matter] 2.5 and [volatile organic compound] concentrations were consistently below health-based air comparison values and thus are not expected to pose acute or chronic health concerns,” the study stated. “The monitoring data ... indicate an absence of air quality impacts of potential health concern at the Fort Cherry School District campus associated with Yonker well pad air emissions.”

A 2011 study by Chemrisk, commissioned by the Fort Cherry School District, came to a similar conclusion.

“The results ... of the fracking and flaring sampling periods were similar to the results obtained from the baseline monitoring period and likewise, did not show anything remarkable with respect to chemicals detected in the ambient air,” the Chemrisk study stated. “When volatile compounds were detected, they were consistent with background levels measured at the school and in other areas in Washington County. Furthermore, a basic yet conservative screening level evaluation shows that the detected volatile compounds were below health-protective levels.”

Below-Average Asthma Rate

There is no evidence fracking is causing health problems in Pennsylvania, says Tim Benson, a policy analyst with The Heartland Institute, which publishes Environment & Climate News.

“Despite the fact Pennsylvania ranks second in natural gas production, it has the fourth-lowest asthma mortality rate in the nation, helping to disprove the myth that fracking and asthma are linked,” Benson said. “Pennsylvania’s asthma mortality rate is even lower than neighboring New York’s, which banned hydraulic fracturing in 2014.

“Even as fracking has helped oil and gas production boom in the Keystone State, asthma hospitalization rates there fell from 17.6 percent in 2004 to 13.4 percent in 2014, representing a 24 percent decline in asthma hospitalization rates during a period when the number of hydraulically fracked wells in the state went from zero to more than 7,500,” Benson said. “Indeed, the state’s six largest shale-producing counties—Bradford, Greene, Lycoming, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Washington—have experienced declining asthma hospitalization rates, with all six having lower rates than the state average.”

Economic Boost from Fracking

The economic effects of the fracking revolution in Pennsylvania have been enormously positive, says Benson.

“A September 2018 Consumer Energy Alliance study found, because natural gas prices declined sharply due to fracking, Pennsylvania residents and businesses saved more than $30.5 billion in energy-related expenses between 2006 and 2016,” Benson said. “Concerning the overall economic benefits of fracking for Pennsylvanians, a 2016 Chamber of Commerce study estimated fracking in the state generated $13 billion in state GDP, $7.2 billion in wages, and created more than 117,000 jobs.

“A 2017 study commissioned by the American Petroleum Institute from PricewaterhouseCoopers found the overall impact of Pennsylvania’s oil and gas industries on the state’s economy was even greater, supporting more than 322,000 jobs and producing $23 billion in wages and $44.5 billion in economic impact in the state in 2015,” Benson said.

Promoting National Security

At no cost to the environment, fracking is benefitting America’s national and economic security, says Gary Stone, vice president of engineering for Five States Energy Company.

“Study after study demonstrates hydraulic fracturing of reservoir rocks more than a mile underground does not substantially contribute to air pollution or pose a risk to human health in general or children’s health in particular,” Stone said. “Fracking is boosting America’s national security by increasing our energy independence and economic performance, without harming the environment.

“That’s a win—a win environmentalists should accept, but they probably won’t because they aren’t concerned about America’s prosperity but rather are blindly driven by a hatred of fossil fuels,” Stone said.

‘We Can Have Both’

Gradient’s study confirms economic growth and public health can go hand in hand, says Elizabeth Stelle, director of policy analysis for the Commonwealth Foundation for Public Policy Alternatives.

“It’s no surprise studies continue to reaffirm the safety of hydraulic fracturing,” Stelle said. “Since the peak of the drilling boom in 2011, methane emissions have declined while production continues to increase.

“We don’t need to choose between our health and economic growth,” Stelle said. “The ever-improving technology around fracking shows we can have both.”

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Justice Department Appeals Court Ruling Stopping Road Through Alaskan Wildlife Refuge

By Kelsey E. Hackem

The U.S. Department of Justice filed notice it is appealing a decision by the Federal District Court of Alaska blocking the federal government from exchanging land with the state and an Alaskan Native Corporation to enable them to build a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge to connect the residents of King Cove to Cold Bay and its airport.

King Cove is located near the tip of the Alaskan Peninsula. Currently, its residents can travel to and from King Cove only via boat or airplane. In emergencies, evacuation is typically done by the U.S. Coast Guard. In addition, air travel from King Cove is unreliable. Its small gravel airstrip is closed because of bad weather more than 100 days per year, and almost 40 percent of the flights that are not cancelled are affected by weather.

Village officials report 19 people have died over the years in medevacs or while awaiting evacuation because of bad weather.

The Trump administration approved the land swap in January 2018, which Alaska’s congressional delegation and state and local officials have long advocated. The deal, signed by then-Secretary of State Ryan Zinke, would provide a right-of-way through the refuge sufficient to construct a single-lane gravel road with barricades on each side.

Concerned About Birds, Grass

Environmental activists have fought efforts to build a road through Izembek for more than a decade, saying it would harm migratory birds that annually visit the refuge and the eel grass they feed on. After Alaskan officials pointed out the refuge already has more than 40 miles of roads through areas of eel grass which people have used regularly since World War II with no measurable effect on the birds, in 2009 Congress approved a land exchange for the road, subject to an environmental impact statement.

Sally Jewell, Interior Secretary under President Barack Obama, rejected the road proposal in 2013, saying the department’s analysis indicated “Construction of a road through Izembek National Wildlife Refuge would lead to significant degradation of irreplaceable ecological resources that would not be offset by the protection of other lands to be received in the exchange.”

The Trump administration examined the decision and came to a different conclusion, approving the land swap. Environmental activists sued, and in mid-May 2018 U.S. District Judge Sharon Gleason, an Obama appointee, blocked the exchange, ruling the Trump administration’s decision was “arbitrary and capricious” under the federal Administrative Procedure Act, saying Zinke had provided no rationale for reversing Interior’s previous decision.

“A agency may not simply discard prior factual findings without a reasoned explanation,” Gleason wrote in her decision.

The Justice Department served notice on May 24, 2019 it would appeal the district court’s decision on behalf of the Interior Department to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth District.

Safety and Fairness

Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R), who has long been a proponent of building a road connecting King Cove to Cold Bay, says the land swap is about being fair to the residents of King Cove and addressing their safety concerns.

“This is about how we provide a level of fairness and equity to those seeking a simple resolution to gain safety when the elements do not allow folks to travel safely by air or by boat,” Murkowski said in a January 2018 statement issued after the Trump administration approved the road deal.

Life and Opportunities

The proposed road is critical to the life and safety of Alaskans in King Cove, says Bethany Marcum, executive director of the Alaska Policy Forum.

“Unlike most communities in the contiguous United States, there is no other feasible access to connect the two communities,” Marcum said. “ANICLA’s Title XI process has not been used to develop a right of way application between Cold Bay and King Cove, but this is exactly what that section of ANILCA was intended to address.”

Legal Battle Continues

Alaskan senators Murkowski and Dan Sullivan (R) told the state’s media outlets they would continue fighting to get the road built.

“The risk to life and limb of human beings is at stake here,” Sullivan said.

[The case will proceed] to make sure that legally and lawfully we will be able to move forward with the conveyance that will allow for this road,” Murkowski said.

Kelsey E. Hackem (khackem@gmail.com) writes from Washington.
Maine Legislature Considers Creating Statewide Electricity Monopoly

By Bonner R. Cohen

Lawmakers in Maine are considering a proposal to combine the state’s two investor-owned electric utilities into a single nonprofit utility monopoly.

As proposed by state Rep. Seth Berry (D-Bowdoinham), chairman of the House Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology, the state would purchase the assets of Central Maine Power (CMP) and Emera Maine and create a public utility responsible for distributing electricity to residential and commercial customers throughout the state.

Berry and others have complained about the utilities’ billing practices, electricity reliability in the state, and the use of renewable energy generation sources. The utilities believe the state’s advocates want less use of renewable energy generation in the state.

Berry claims the state’s two investor-owned electric companies, CMP and Emera Maine, are responsible for billing and customer service practices that are the root cause of rates that are “too high, too unpredictable, and not reflective of the cost of delivering the energy.”

Price Tag: At Least $4 Billion

Under Berry’s proposal, CMP and Emera would be forced to sell their assets to a new public utility created by the state. The legislation would be administered by a nine-member bipartisan board appointed by the governor, subject to the approval of the legislature, representing different rate-payer classes, such as residential customers and large and small businesses.

Under Berry’s proposal, MPDA would be managed by a nine-member, bipartisan board appointed by the governor, subject to the approval of the legislature, representing different rate-payer classes, such as residential customers and large and small businesses.

‘Will Only Make Matters Worse’

Maine’s utility customers are upset about the high prices and numerous outages they have experienced, says Jake Posik, director of communications at the Maine Heritage Policy Center, but Berry’s bill would make a bad situation worse.

“The frustration Mainer are currently experiencing with their power provider is due to lack of competition within the marketplace,” Posik said.

“Forcing CMP and Emera Maine to sell their assets to the state will only make matters worse.

“If Mainers are upset about billing practices from a private power provider, just wait until this organization is run by government,” Posik said. “It will be even less efficient and responsive to people’s needs.

“The absurd amount of money this proposal would burden current and future Maine taxpayers with would likely take decades to repay, all for the purpose of establishing government ownership of public utilities,” Posik said.

Concerned About Corruption, Message

Customer service would decline, not improve, under government ownership of the utility, says Alexander Stevens, a policy analyst at the Institute for Energy Research.

“The new system would replace the profit-and-loss calculus that disciplines decision-making in a private market setting with a political board composed of [nine] members appointed by the governor of Maine,” Stevens said.

“Given the opportunities the board has to facilitate rent seeking, there is little reason to believe these appointees will be selected based on their knowledge of electricity markets or their commitment to serve the public interest. Rather, it’s more likely they will be selected based on their ability to serve special interests.

“In addition, if government were to seize the assets of the investor-owned utilities, it would signal to businesses that property rights are not secure in the state, making them less likely to invest in Maine in the future,” Stevens said.

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcoken@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research and a senior policy analyst with the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow.
House Moves to Block President from Leaving Paris Climate Agreement

By Bonner R. Cohen

The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to block President Donald Trump’s decision to take the United States out of the Paris climate agreement.

Radical Greenhouse Gas Reductions

Under the terms of the Paris climate agreement, which the Obama administration helped develop and President Barack Obama signed in 2015, the United States committed to reducing its greenhouse-gas emissions 28 percent below its 2005 levels by 2025.

In a rebuke to the Obama administration at a Rose Garden press event in June 2017, Trump announced he would withdraw the United States from the Paris agreement. This action was in keeping with a commitment Trump made during his campaign for the presidency. Trump said the agreement was bad for the U.S. economy and the world did not face a climate crisis.

Under the terms of the agreement, the United States cannot withdraw before November 4, 2020, one day after next year’s presidential election and four years after the agreement went into effect.

‘We Are Still In’

H.R. 9, the Climate Action Now Act (CANA), is arguably the most significant climate change bill the House has passed in a decade. CANA would block the president from using any federal funds to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.

The bill also directs Trump to develop a plan to meet the emission reduction targets in the agreement.

This bill would ensure the United States complies with the Paris agreement, says Rep. Frank Pallone Jr. (D-NJ), chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

“Today we sent a message to the president, to the American people, and to the world that we recognize the seriousness of the climate crisis, and that we intend to do our part to address it,” Pallone said a statement. “Today we sent the message: We are still in.”

The House, currently controlled by the Democratic Party, passed CANA on May 2, almost two years after Trump said he would withdraw the United States from the Paris agreement, with a vote of 231 in favor of the bill and 190 opposed. The vote was along party lines, with three Republicans joining the Democratic majority in passing the bill.

‘Exciting Political Theater’

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) characterized the bill as symbolic, saying on the Senate floor it was “exciting political theater” by House Democrats but he did not intend to bring the measure up for a vote in the Senate.

“This futile gesture to handcuff the U.S. economy through the ill-fated Paris deal will go nowhere here in the Senate,” McConnell said on the Senate floor. “We’re in the business of actually helping middle-class families, not inventing new obstacles to throw in their paths.”

The Trump administration also panned the bill in a statement, saying it would “interfere with the President’s constitutional authority to conduct foreign relations, including the authority to withdraw from an executive agreement.”

In a bit of legislative theatrics of his own, McConnell forced a Senate vote in March on the Green New Deal (GND), a bill that would force the United States to essentially end the use of fossil fuels by 2030. The chamber overwhelmingly rejected the bill, with three Democrats and one Independent joining the entire Republican caucus in voting against it. The bill did not garner a single vote in its favor, with even its authors and sponsors voting “present” instead of yes.

House Republicans still hope to bring the GND up for a floor vote. In May, Rep. Jody Hice (R-GA) filed a discharge petition to force a vote on the resolution.

Agreement, or Treaty?

Though officially referred to as an agreement, the Paris climate pact is a treaty in all but name. Realizing it would never receive the two-thirds supermajority required for Senate ratification, the Obama administration labeled the Paris climate document an “executive agreement” instead of a treaty and sought to implement it through a string of regulatory actions restricting the development and use of fossil fuels.

The Paris climate agreement would cost the country trillions of dollars while doing nothing to affect climate change, says Jay Lehr, Ph.D., a senior policy analyst at the International Climate Science Coalition.

“President Trump’s withdrawal from the Paris Agreement was primarily driven by the enormous costs it would have imposed on American families and businesses,” Lehr said. “Estimates of its costs ran as high as $2.5 trillion, yet even many of the agreement’s backers acknowledge if all the parties to it kept their commitments, the effect on global temperatures would be negligible.

“What would not be negligible would be the massive reduction and redistribution of income which lies at the center of the climate-change agenda,” Lehr said. “With its vote, the House is virtue-signaling and participating in the scientific fraud that is manmade global warming.”

Overtaken by Events?

The plentiful energy delivered by the fracking revolution has undermined the Paris climate agreement and other laws and treaties intended to restrict fossil fuel development, much to the dismay of climate fear-mongers and profiteers, says Craig Rucker, president of the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (CFACT).

“The Paris Agreement is about hamstringing the U.S. energy behemoth. Nothing sends chills down the spines of climate alarmists, and the purveyors of renewable energy who hope to profit from mandated energy scarcity, more than the prospect of the United States supplying itself and much of the rest of the world with affordable and reliable energy.”

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The very fabric of America is under attack—our freedoms, our republic, and our constitutional rights have become contested terrain. The Epoch Times, a media committed to truthful and responsible journalism, is a rare bastion of hope and stability in these testing times.
NV Law Mandates Costly 100% Carbon-Dioxide-Free Electricity

By Kenneth Artz

On Earth Day, Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak signed into law Senate Bill 358, requiring 50 percent of the electricity provided by utilities in the state to come from renewable resources by 2030 and setting a goal for utilities to get 100 percent of their electricity from sources that don’t emit carbon dioxide during generation by 2050.

Senate Bill 358 passed in rapid fashion on consecutive days, with Nevada’s Senate unanimously approving it on April 18 and the Nevada Assembly clearing it on April 19 with no legislator voting against it. This allowed Sisolak to sign it on Earth Day, April 22.

Nevada’s previous renewable energy mandate required 25 percent of the electricity utilities delivered to be generated by renewables sources such as geothermal, solar, and wind by 2025.

Sisolak’s signature made Nevada the fourth state in the United States to commit to 100 percent carbon-dioxide-free energy, joining California, Hawaii, and New Mexico.

Following Voters, or Leading?

Nevada voters passed a ballot initiative, Question 6, pushed by Neavandans for a Clean Energy Future, a climate interest group funded by California billionaire and progressive activist Tom Steyer, in the November 2018 midterm elections. Question 6 mandates at least 50 percent of the electricity provided by utilities in the state must come from renewable sources by 2030.

Question 6 did not become law with the initiative's initial approval, as Nevada requires any constitutional amendment to pass in two consecutive elections to be ratified. Absent the legislature’s action, voters would have had to approve the renewable mandate amendment again in the 2020 election before it could have taken effect. In the past, voters have rejected ballot initiatives upon reconsideration during such follow-up elections.

Whether the initiative will now appear on the ballot is unclear, but if it is and voters reject it during their second vote, it could mean trouble for the new law. If voters reject the renewable energy constitutional amendment in 2020, those who object to the bill could challenge the new law in court, arguing the legislature should not impose a mandate voters explicitly rejected.

Slow Adoption, Fast Inflation

Research continues to indicate imposing ever-higher renewable energy mandates (REMs) on utilities results in substantially higher electricity prices for businesses and homeowners.

A study by the Energy Policy Institute (EPI) at the University of Chicago found seven years after REMs are enacted, on average renewables’ share of electricity generation increases by only 1.8 percent, yet retail electricity prices rise by 11 percent. After 12 years, as renewables’ share of electricity generation has increased by 4.2 percent, electricity prices have risen by 17 percent, the study found.

The EPI study is one of many showing REMs dramatically increase retail electricity prices, says Tim Benson, a policy analyst with The Heartland Institute, which publishes Environment & Climate News.

“Altogether, the total extra electricity costs of renewable mandates to consumers in the states enacting them are $125.2 billion.” Benson said. “Moreover, it should be noted that whether there is a ‘social cost’ imposed by carbon dioxide emissions at all is very debatable.”

Disproportionate Harm

The legislature’s decision to increase the state’s renewable mandate dramatically will almost certainly be bad for Nevada’s electricity consumers, says Eric Eisenhammer, founder of the Coalition of Energy Users.

“As an advocate for energy consumers and jobs, the legislature’s decision is disappointing,” Eisenhammer said. “Other states have already repealed their renewable mandates to protect consumers, while others, like California, that have increased their mandates have seen costs go through the roof and their industrial base decimated.

Regardless of the merits of the proposal, Nevada voters were expected to decide its fate at the ballot box in 2020, thus politicians in Carson City should not have usurped voters’ choices and made this decision now,” Eisenhammer said.

The poor suffer the most when energy prices rise, says Benson, explaining the decision to enact SB 358 is a direct assault on low-income people.

“If the state legislators care about the plight of the poor, they should not mandate the use of renewable sources in electricity generation, because such mandates raise energy costs, which disproportionately harms low-income families,” Benson said. “To help Nevada’s poor and the state’s business environment alike, instead of trying to increase renewable mandates, legislators should repeal them.”

Kenneth Artz (kennethcharlesartz@gmx.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.
New Hampshire Senate Rejects Plastic Bag, Soda Straw Bans

By Kelsey E. Hackem

New Hampshire will not ban thin-film plastic bags or limit restaurants’ use of plastic soda straws this year.

The state Senate decided not to pass two measures which would have prohibited grocery stores, restaurants, and retailers from providing single-use plastic carry-out bags to customers and would have prevented restaurants and other food vendors from providing plastic straws unless specifically requested.

The New Hampshire Senate declined to pass the plastic straw ban, and it approved an amended version of H.B. 560 that stripped out the bag ban and instead will require New Hampshire towns to produce annual waste management reports, on May 15.

‘Consumers Now Are Free’

A plastic bag ban is not right for New Hampshire, says state Rep. Glenn Cordelli (R-Carroll).

“NH is the ‘Live Free or Die’ state,” Cordelli said. “Consumers now are free to use canvas bags to carry groceries without a government mandate or ban on plastics.”

Bag ban supporters do not understand people use disposable plastic bags for much more than carrying food from a store, says Cordelli.

“In many cases, the term ‘single use’ is a misnomer,” Cordelli said. “Many people who do carry their groceries out in plastic bags reuse them in their household for things such as trash can liners.”

Costs But Not Benefits

Taxes and bans on single-use plastic bags produce little environmental benefit while increasing costs to retailers and consumers, says Angela Logomasini, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

“Both bans and taxes inconvenience consumers, costing them money in return for no environmental benefit,” Logomasini said. “Taxes are bad, but a ban is even worse because it forces consumers to use products that produce more waste and use more energy.”

Minuscule Trash Effect

Plastic bags do not contribute significant amounts of trash, says Matt Seaholm, executive director of the American Progressive Bag Alliance.

“Bags make up less than 0.3 percent of waste and consistently less than 1 percent of litter,” Seaholm said. “Plastic grocery bags are 100 percent recyclable, and 78 percent [are reused], according to one recent study.”

Alternatives Bad for Environment

Alternatives to plastic bags have significant environmental costs, says Logomasini.

Logomasini said. “Taxes are bad, but a ban is even worse because it forces consumers to use products that produce more waste and use more energy.”

“Reusable cloth bags ... require far more energy and other resources to make, and they may produce more landfill waste.”

ANGELA LOGOMASINI
SENIOR FELLOW, COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Mexican Gray Wolf Livestock Kills Are Rising Rapidly in AZ, NM

By Kenneth Artz

Endangered Mexican gray wolves, reintroduced by the federal government to parts of the Southwestern United States, have killed nearly as many cows and calves in the first four months of 2019 as they did all of last year, causing an increase in tensions among U.S. wildlife managers, environmentalists, and rural residents.

The federal government reports the wolves killed 88 domestic animals in Arizona and New Mexico from January through April of this year.

If this pace of livestock killings continues, the wolves will far surpass the nearly 100 livestock kills confirmed in 2018. They have already eclipsed the livestock deaths record attributed to wolves over the same four-month period in any year since they were reintroduced in the region in 1998.

History Repeating Itself

Ranchers in New Mexico and Arizona are experiencing what ranchers and farmers elsewhere have suffered as the federal government has reintroduced gray wolves, says Brian Seasholes, an independent scholar whose research focuses on endangered species.

“While rural people bear the very real costs of living with a destructive predator, they have been relatively powerless against distant urban masses who lobby vociferously against state control of wolf populations,” Seasholes said. “For decades, farmers in the upper Great Lakes region, especially northern Minnesota, have suffered from federally protected wolves eating their livestock, hunting dogs, and pets.

“Now, unfortunately, this same pattern is being repeated in Arizona and New Mexico,” Seasholes said. “If environmental lobbyists sincerely cared about wolf conservation, they would use their deep pockets to establish a meaningful compensation fund for ranchers and others who have had animals killed by wolves.”

Ranchers Paying the Price

The federal government should take responsibility for the harm wolves cause farmers and ranchers, says Paul J. Gessing, president of the Rio Grande Foundation.

“The federal wolf reintroduction program is a heavy-handed federal program supported by urbanites who will likely never see a wolf in the wild and who will not experience losses to wolves,” Gessing said. “Because the reintroduction program is not going away, constant effort by the federal government is essential to ensure rural residents who lose livestock to wolves are not unfairly impacted.”

Spreading the Costs

It’s not right for ranchers to bear the cost of livestock kills from Mexican gray wolves, says Daren Bakst, a senior research fellow at The Heritage Foundation.

“Some environmental extremists appear to think ranchers should accept Mexican gray wolves attacking their livestock,” Bakst said. “This mentality undermines species conservation. If society wants to protect the Mexican gray wolf, then society as a whole, not ranchers who are doing nothing wrong, should bear the cost.”

Kenneth Artz (kennethcharlesartz@gmx.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.
Federal Coal Sales Won’t Impact Climate, Trump Admin. Says

By Kenneth Artz

A new U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) environmental analysis found allowing federal coal sales would make little difference in the overall amount of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

Consider Climate, Says Judge

In March of 2017, President Donald Trump’s administration lifted a moratorium on coal sales from federal lands previously imposed by the Obama administration.

Several environmental activist groups, the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, and the attorneys general of California, New Mexico, New York, and Washington, all Democrats, filed a suit to reject the Interior Department’s decision to rescind the Obama administration’s moratorium on coal sales. The plaintiffs argued resuming coal sales would increase the release of greenhouse gases and cause greater harm from purportedly man-made climate change.

On April 19 of this year, Federal District Judge Brian Morris in Montana ruled the Trump administration’s decision to resume coal sales was not “a mere policy shift” and therefore the administration should have considered potential damage to the environment from the resumption of coal sales on federal lands.

Morris ruled Trump administration Interior Department officials had wrongly avoided an environmental review of their action, even though the same department under President Barack Obama had conducted no environmental assessment of its action when it imposed the moratorium in January 2016.

“The moratorium provided protections on public lands for more than 14 months,” Morris said in his April 19 decision, and lifting the moratorium was a “major federal action” sufficient to trigger the requirement of a detailed analysis of its environmental impacts.

Morris’s decision was only a partial victory for the plaintiffs. He did not bar future coal sales but only ordered federal attorneys to enter into negotiations with the environmental groups, states, and tribal officials over how to proceed.

BLM: No Climate Effect

Ordered by Morris to consider the climate implications of reopening coal leasing on federal lands, the Bureau of Land Management completed an environmental analysis and found allowing federal coal sales would have little effect on the U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

After reviewing the applications from companies for coal leases totaling more than 2.5 billion tons, BLM estimated just over five billion tons of greenhouse gases would be produced from burning the fuel for electricity over the next 20 years, the equivalent of just a little over 1 percent of the 2017 amount of greenhouse gas emissions from the energy sector.

“The lifting of the coal leasing pause would not change the cumulative levels of [greenhouse gas] emissions resulting from coal leasing,” BLM’s May 22 report concluded.

BLM’s report states nearly 40 percent of the coal burned in the United States comes from federal leases, primarily in Western states such as Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming.

During the past decade, companies have mined about four billion tons of coal from federal reserves, in the process contributing $10 billion in federal and state taxes through royalties and other payments.

Unmeasurable Effect on Temperature

The Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change’s recent report, Climate Change Reconsidered II: Fossil Fuels, shows a warmer climate has produced net benefits to human health and welfare, as has the use of coal as an energy source, says James Taylor, a senior fellow for environment and energy policy at The Heartland Institute, which publishes Environment & Climate News.

“The Earth continues to warm at a very modest pace, about half or less of what the UN climate models predict,” Taylor said. “The warming that has occurred has produced substantial net benefits, including greater crop production, lower human mortality, and an overall greening of the Earth.

“Even if we were to ignore such facts, the impact of U.S. coal emissions on global temperatures is almost too small to be measured,” Taylor said. Taylor says replacements for coal are more expensive and produce lower revenues for the federal government.

“The Obama administration shackled the American economy and household living standards by restricting coal development—which provided affordable power and paid substantial fees and royalties to taxpayers—on federal lands while encouraging wind and solar production instead,” Taylor said. “Wind and solar power are more expensive forms of power and do not provide the fee and royalty benefits that coal, oil, and natural gas development provide.”

CO2 Environmental Benefits

President Trump was right to rescind Obama’s coal restrictions because carbon dioxide is beneficial to the environment, says Fred Palmer, a senior fellow at the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change.

“Both domestically and abroad, there is a massive amount of nonfederal coal that will be used and is absolutely capable of meeting demand for any additional supply wherever located,” Palmer said. “Additional emissions from combustion of U.S. or international coal, oil, and natural gas will have minimal impact on climate no matter what one thinks of CO2, given well-known laws of physics show each incremental addition of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere has an increasingly diminishing impact from a warming standpoint.

“Finally, carbon dioxide is a benign gas required for life on earth—it’s good, not bad,” Palmer said. “More carbon dioxide in the air means an accelerated greening of planet Earth, more robust food production, a more robust biosphere and therefore animal life, an improved natural environment, and a better human environment for all of us.”

Kenneth Artz (kennethcharlesartz@gmx.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.
The Misleading Conclusions from the Fourth National Climate Assessment

By Stan Liebowitz

Volume 2 of the Fourth National Climate Assessment (NCA4), a document of more than 1,500 pages examining the expected future economic cost of climate change, was published online on November 23, 2018.

The media reported its release with great fanfare, with the Atlantic, CNN, and NPR describing it as “dire,” CBS News calling it “alarming,” Wired describing it as predicting “collapse and ruin,” and Gizmodo saying the report demonstrates “we’re screwed.”

Admittedly, the tone of NCA4 is consistent with these apocalyptic descriptions, describing unending fires and hailstones, storms, and floods, all the while showing riveting, full-color pictures of mountainsides blazing at dusk and houses being washed into the sea.

But despite all the doomsday descriptions, the projected costs of climate change found in the report are actually paltry in the big picture of things. Even assuming all its projections are accurate, the damages portrayed in the report are far too small to justify costly and disruptive actions such as those proposed in the Green New Deal.

**Long Timeline**

NCA4 purportedly provides “a thorough examination of the effects of climate change on the United States.” NCA4 estimates the damage the nation will experience from climate change in the year 2090, because the 1990 Act establishing the NCA required predictions for the next century. Predicting anything seventy years into the future is normally considered a fool’s errand, but such prognostications are routine when considering climate change.

Any future harm depends on actions the United States and other countries take between now and then to mitigate the effects of climate change. The report discusses several possible types of actions countries could take to limit their carbon dioxide emissions.

Scenario RCP8.5 (8.5), the scenario NCA4 publicizes, assumes the United States and the world keep increasing carbon dioxide emissions through the end of the century, approximately tripling their current yearly level. The Trump administration criticized NCA4 for focusing on this worst-case scenario, although it should have welcomed the findings given how small the expected damage is.

**Damage Expectations**

NCA4 estimates the dollar value (in 2015 dollars) of twenty-two different categories of potential damage in the United States from global warming in the year 2090. The 22 categories include damages due to rising oceans, mortality due to excessive heat or poor air quality, damage from additional diseases such as West Nile Virus, and repair costs for roads and bridges damaged by floods or erosion.

NCA4 assumes both that the economy grows during the next 70 years as a result of increases in population, productivity, and technology, and that none of the technological improvements in the next 70 years mitigate climate change to any serious extent.

NCA4 provides a figure and table (reproduced here) summarizing the damages under 8.5 and the reduced harm under RCP4.5 as a result of greater mitigation efforts.

Surprisingly, the total cost of the 22 rows of estimated harms is never summed up so as to show the total dollar value of climate-induced damage. Nor are those damages ever compared to the 2090 GDP predicted by NCA4.

**Small Change**

When the rows are summed, the total damages are shown to be $507.6 billion, as seen in the accompanying table.

A value of $507.6 billion seems huge to individuals unfamiliar with large economic magnitudes (such as GDP) and appears to have most journalists virtually fainting from fright. For most people, such a number has to be put into some sort of perspective before they can grasp its importance or lack thereof. The simplest way to put the number in perspective is to compare this predicted 2090 loss with the predicted 2090 GDP, as is done in the last row of the table, leading to the clear result predicted climate change damages in 2090 represent slightly more than 0.7 percent of U.S. GDP.

Thus the damage from climate change in NCA4’s worst-case scenario, according to our “best scientists and experts,” is less than 1 percent of U.S. GDP in 2090. The ratio would be even lower if any of the advanced technologies certain to be created in the next 70 years were used to help reduce carbon emissions.

Is a reduction in GDP of 0.7 percent really something to get frantic about? I think the question answers itself. Would a stock market loss of 1 percent cause people to throw themselves out of windows? How many stores run advertisements proclaiming their 1-percent-off sales?

A change of less than 1 percent is not the type of value on which people base life-altering decisions. Such low values are frequently ignored in our daily lives.

**Clear Implications**

By law, the NCA4 is supposed to be a thorough examination of climate change impacts. Thus, if the authors have done their job and looked at the most consequential costs of climate change, the current NCA4 should provide a reasonable indication of the likely harm.

Accordingly, the findings of the report are clear: Under even the worst-case scenario, the harms from climate change in 2090, assuming 70 years of increasing carbon dioxide emissions, are fairly trivial. Even if the NCA4 predicted damages were too low by a factor of 10, the expected harm would be only mildly painful to the economy.

As a result, the United States should not undertake outsized efforts to fight climate change.

Stan Liebowitz, Ph.D. (liebowit@utdallas.edu) is the Ashbel Smith Professor of Managerial Economics at the University of Texas at Dallas and a policy advisor to The Heartland Institute.
Regulatory Science 101: Risk Assessments vs. EU-Style Hazard Assessments

By Jeff Stier

Can we ever be “too safe?” Before answering that question, consider that in an effort to make the world around us ever-safer, we sometimes tend to ignore unintended tradeoffs with potentially worse consequences than the dangers we are trying to avoid.

Bye-Bye, Kids’ ATVs

After the federal Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act became law in 2008, dirt bikes and ATVs designed for kids were forced off the market because their batteries contained lead. These kid-friendly vehicles were smaller, lighter, and less powerful than adult models, providing significant safety benefits. I know, because I learned to ride a Honda SL-80 safely when I was ten years old.

Granted, it wasn’t the safest activity for a child, but none of the risks emanated from the likelihood I’d open up the battery and chew on it.

While consuming lead poses a significant health hazard, my risk of exposure to that hazard was nil, because it wasn’t something I—or anyone—would have chewed on. The elimination of a hazard where there was no risk ended up increasing the risk of hazardous injury to youths by causing them to ride vehicles that are too big and heavy for them.

Hazard vs. Risk

Understanding the distinction between hazard and risk is critical in ensuring not only products for children but also things we use daily are safe for humans and the environment.

A given chemical could be hazardous—having the potential to cause harm—but if the risk of exposure to dangerous levels of the chemical is insignificant, regulating its use can be harmful, as when it unnecessarily removes products (like my dirt bike) from the market.

The bipartisan 2016 Frank Launtenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, which updated federal chemical safety laws, took this into account. It requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use risk-based assessments in evaluating chemicals. This is a more sensible approach than the hazard-based assessments still used in the European Union (EU).

Risk-based assessments allow us to safely benefit from a broader array of products, allowing us to avoid harmful exposures without casting a broad regulatory net lacking commensurate safety gains.

‘Turn Back the Clock’

As federal chemical oversight has become more comprehensive and reliable, powerful fringe groups are targeting state legislators, hoping to advance an agenda that plays well in sound bites though it lacks any basis in science.

These activists are seeking to turn back the clock on advances in regulatory science by lobbying states to enact laws requiring small state agencies to develop lists of allegedly dangerous chemicals based not on risk but on hazard.

For instance, legislation passed in Albany in April requires the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to develop a list of “dangerous” chemicals that would then be de facto banned in new children’s toys. This, despite the fact federal law already requires the EPA to comprehensively evaluate existing chemicals.

New York’s law will limit consumers’ choices and harm New York businesses without providing any actual protection, because federal scientists already have the mandate, expertise, equipment, and funding to do this complex and important work properly. The same cannot be said for state agencies like New York’s, let alone those in Maine, Vermont, and Washington State, where similar legislation has either passed or is advancing.

Compiling such lists wastes precious resources and will set back progress by restricting useful chemicals that don’t pose risks. We can learn from the fallout from California’s 1986 chemical listing law known as Proposition 65. That regulatory monstrosity most recently earned embarrassing headlines when it was almost successfully used to require cancer warning labels at coffee shops.

Assessing the Risk of Silicones

Chemicals, like those that make up coffee, can be added to the Proposition 65 list simply because some authority somewhere once deemed them a hazard. Chemical regulation proposals before many state legislatures today are similarly flawed.

Consider the treatment of a class of chemicals called siloxanes: essential building blocks for silicones which are critical to much of modern society. Certain unique properties, which make them essential for safe aviation, energy-efficient LED lighting, and medical products, have caused some to question silicones’’ effect on the environment. For instance, do they bioaccumulate and therefore pose a risk to aquatic life?

Canada’s version of the EPA—Environment and Climate Change Canada—performed a comprehensive risk assessment for Siloxane D5, determining “it is virtually impossible for Siloxane D5 to occur in any environmental matrix at concentrations sufficient to produce harm to the environment.” An Australian evaluation later reached a similar conclusion, and the U.S. EPA is currently performing its own risk assessment.

By using the American, Australian, or Canadian approach to risk assessment, Siloxane D5 and other critically important chemical building blocks of our modern world will be regulated to protect human health and the environment but will remain available.

EU Standards Reduce Safety

Pressured by activists, the EU imposed a hazard-based approach to chemical regulation, resulting in many important and safe chemicals being unnecessarily restricted there.

The lists of dangerous chemicals, pushed by chemophobic environmental activists, being developed by states are pernicious because they ignore federal risk assessments, instead using outdated hazard assessments with the goal of imposing overly restrictive EU-style chemical bans.

Regulations should be based on scientific assessment of the risks of exposure to a chemical or product, not simply a hazard assessment. Using the latter standard will make society worse off and actually make us less safe.”

Jeff Stier (jeffstier@gmail.com) is a senior fellow at the Consumer Choice Center and a policy advisor to The Heartland Institute.
Each month, Environment & Climate News updates the global averaged satellite measurements of the Earth’s temperature. These numbers are important because they are real—not projections, forecasts, or guesses. Global satellite measurements are made from a series of orbiting platforms that sense the average temperature in various atmospheric layers. Here, we present the lowest level, which climate models say should be warming. The satellite measurements are considered accurate to within 0.01°C. The data used to create these graphs can be found on the Internet at http://vortex.nsstc.uah.edu/data/msu/v6.0beta/tlt/uahncdc_lt_6.0beta5.txt All past data were revised when the methodology was updated in April 2015.

**MAY 2019**

**GLOBAL SATELLITE TEMPERATURES**

**HOW MUCH GLOBAL WARMING?**

The Southern Hemisphere’s temperature was 0.35°C above average.

The Northern Hemisphere’s temperature was 0.29°C above average.

**GLOBAL AVERAGE**

**NORTHERN HEMISPHERE**

**SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE**

**219,000 years of Temperature Variation**


**Global Average Temperature**

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**Northern Hemisphere Temperature**

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**Southern Hemisphere Temperature**

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