EPA’s McCarthy: New CO2 Restrictions Not About Climate

By Bonner R. Cohen

The Environmental Protection Agency’s recently announced restrictions on carbon dioxide emissions have nothing to do with reducing pollution, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy said in Senate hearings.

Instead, said McCarthy, EPA imposed the restrictions because agency staff believe imposing expensive renewable energy on the electricity marketplace will stimulate the economy.

‘Not About Pollution Control’

“The great thing about this proposal is that it really is an investment opportunity. This is not about pollution control,” McCarthy told the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee on July 23. “It’s about increased efficiency at our plants. It’s about investment in renewables and clean energy. It’s about investments in people’s ability to lower

Hollywood Activists’ Sellout Caught on Video

By Alyssa Carducci

Three prominent Hollywood environmental activists were caught on video agreeing to sell out their nation’s energy independence to Middle Eastern oil producers. The activists were willing to do so in exchange for $9 million to make an anti-fracking film.

Video from investigative journalist James O’Keefe’s Project Veritas shows a man posing as “Muhammad,” a member of a wealthy Middle Eastern oil family, having lunch at a Beverly Hills restaurant with Hollywood environmental activists Ed Begley Jr., Mariel Hemingway, and Josh Tickell.

Muhammad and a man posing as an ad executive offer the Hollywood environmental activists money to help
The Ninth International Conference on Climate Change (ICCC-9) was held on July 7-9, 2014 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Some 650 scientists, economists, policy experts, and guests debated whether man-made global warming is a problem worth addressing. The event was hosted by The Heartland Institute, had 32 cosponsors, and featured 64 keynoters and panelists.

A recent Washington Examiner article highlighted the broad impact of ICCC-9 and described how the event has launched a growing international network of activists opposed to the threats to our freedom, economy, and way of life posed by radical global warming alarmists.

If you missed ICCC-9, you missed what has been universally acclaimed as Heartland’s best climate conference ever – and some attendees told us it was the best and most-informative conference of any kind they had ever attended. You can now view every video presentation, download every PowerPoint presentation, and even grab just the audio of the speeches for listening on-the-go at climateconferences.heartland.org.
Farmers Oppose EPA Water Grab

By Bonner R. Cohen

A n 88-page regulatory proposal designed to “clarify” federal jurisdiction of “waters of the United States” is sowing opposition in the agricultural community, provoking calls for Congress to step in and force the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to withdraw the rule.

The Obama administration, acting through EPA, claims regulatory uncertainty in the wake of two recent Supreme Court rulings gives it authority to increase the number and kind of streams and wetlands that are subject to federal regulation under the Clean Water Act (CWA).

The two Court decisions, however, rebuked prior EPA water grab and restricted EPA regulatory authority.

Restricting Agricultural ‘Exemptions’

EPA is proposing a parallel “interpretive rule” that will limit the traditional farming practices exempt from EPA’s proposal. EPA has identified 56 such exemptions, but under the proposal the practices must be carried out in accordance with standards set by the Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Farmers and agricultural trade associations have noted some of the 56 practices EPA identified currently do not require permits, and they say they fear NRCS is being transformed from a conservation service promoting voluntary stewardship into a regulatory body. A coalition of more than 90 farm organizations nationwide has criticized EPA’s proposed interpretive rule.

Turning Legal Defeats into Mandates

EPA justified its proposed regulatory action by citing two recent Supreme Court decisions that restricted its authority.

In Rapanos v. United States (2006), the Supreme Court rebuked EPA for overreaching in attempting to regulate isolated wetlands. In an earlier ruling, Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. Army Corps of Engineers (2001), the Court ruled EPA overstepped its bounds in attempting to regulate the discharge of dredged and fill material into what EPA claimed were “navigable waters of the United States” under section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Despite losing both cases, EPA claims ambiguities in the rulings give it greater authority than ever before to regulate private land and isolated, intermittent bodies of water.

Midwestern Farmers Oppose

In July, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy embarked on a public relations blitz in the Midwest, where she tried to counter some of the blistering criticism that has come her way.

Her efforts, however, merely antagonized Midwestern farmers. For example, agricultural groups in Missouri expressed displeasure over being excluded from the tour and noted the press was barred from attending the one meeting they had with McCarthy.

According to the American Farm Bureau Federation, during her tour McCarthy “alternated between derision and expressions of sympathy with farmers” and accused farmers’ groups of “enjoy[ing] the anxiety that’s been created.”

Even fairly liberal newspapers such as the Kansas City Star criticized EPA’s new proposals.

“Two bills in the U.S. House of Representatives would prohibit EPA from moving forward with its proposed rules. The Democrat-controlled Senate, however, is unlikely to approve—or even be allowed to vote on—such a bill.

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Even fairly liberal newspapers such as the Kansas City Star criticized EPA’s new proposals.

“EPA’s latest proposed regulations have failed the test of being clear to the public,” the Star editorial board wrote.

“Many farmers don’t trust the EPA or McCarthy’s soothing words,” the Star explained. “The proposed rule needs to be rewritten to spell out exactly what is changing—but also clearly focus on what’s staying the same for the majority of farmers.”

Congressional Action Blocked

Two bills in the U.S. House of Representatives would prohibit EPA from moving forward with its proposed rules. The Democrat-controlled Senate, however, is unlikely to approve—or even be allowed to vote on—a bill.

“Congress has steadfastly refused to give EPA the power to impose itself on farmers in this fashion—and with good reason,” Rucker explained. “One wonders how many EPA bureaucrats, including Gina McCarthy, have ever set foot on a farm, much less have any inkling how a farm operates.”

“It is the height of arrogance and insensitivity for EPA to use two Supreme Court decisions as justification to grab even more power than ever before,” said Jay Lehr, science director for The Heartland Institute, which publishes Environment & Climate News.

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EPA’s McCarthy: New CO2 Curbs Not About Climate

Continued from page 1

their electricity bills by getting good, clean, efficient appliances, homes, rental units.”

McCarthy’s comments came as a surprise to utilities facing steep costs attempting to comply with the proposed restrictions. The comments also came at a time when the Obama administration’s prior EPA restrictions have pushed U.S. electricity prices to an all-time record high.

Contradicts Prior Testimony

McCarthy’s Senate testimony represents a significant departure from the way EPA defended its proposal before lawmakers just a month earlier.

At a June hearing before the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Acting Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation Janet McCabe offered a different explanation. Citing Section 111(b) of the Clean Air Act, which authorizes EPA to regulate certain pollutants, McCabe made this argument in her testimony:

“Chairman Upton, this is not an energy plan. This is a rule done within the four corners of 111(b) that looks to the best system of emission reduction to reduce emission. ... This is a pollution control rule as EPA has traditionally done...”

McCarthy’s comment didn’t escape the attention of climatologist Roy Spencer.

“This gaffe could come back to bite the EPA. The Endangerment Finding was all about the negative effect of ‘carbon pollution’ on the environment. Now we find out ‘this is not about pollution control’?”

ROY W. SPENCER, PH.D.
CLIMATOLOGIST, AUTHOR

“Remarkably Bad Investments’

McCarthy’s insistence that EPA’s move should be seen more as an investment opportunity than an environmental initiative drew skepticism from energy expert Daniel Simmons, director for state policy at the Institute for Energy Research.

“Other countries have seized the ‘investment opportunities’ McCarthy claims this regulation creates,” Simmons said. “Spain heavily ‘invested’ in wind and solar in the form of taxpayer subsidies and preferential treatment and subsequently lost 2.2 jobs for each green job created. The U.K. similarly ‘invested’ in wind and solar and lost 3.7 jobs for each green job created. Those were remarkably bad investments.”

“Germany heavily subsidized solar jobs to the tune of $240,000 per job. Now Germany has realized its mistake and is pulling back from these subsidies. These are the types of ‘investments’ McCarthy is calling for in the United States,” Simmons noted.

With or without EPA’s asserted economic benefits, the carbon dioxide restrictions will have no real-world impact on pollution or global climate, Simmons noted.

Carbon dioxide has no discernible impact on air quality other than as a greenhouse gas, he observed. Even if global warming were a concern, Simmons said, the United States is responsible for only a small portion of global carbon dioxide emissions. Whereas U.S. emissions have declined since the beginning of the century, global emissions continue to rise sharply.

“While McCarthy is wrong to say these are investment opportunities, she is correct in saying the regulation is not about pollution,” said Simmons.

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INTERNET INFO
Colorado Court Overturns Ft. Collins Fracking Ban

By Alyssa Carducci

The city of Ft. Collins cannot lawfully ban energy production through hydraulic fracturing, a Colorado court has ruled. The court's decision overturned a city ordinance enacted after voters in the liberal university town approved a November 2013 ballot initiative imposing a five-year ban on fracking.

The ordinance stated, “The people of Fort Collins seek to protect themselves from the harms associated with hydraulic fracturing, including threats to public health and safety, property damage and diminished property values, poor air quality, destruction of landscape, and pollution of drinking and surface water.” It also stated the city would study fracking issues during the five-year moratorium.

The State of Colorado District Court in Laramie County noted hydraulic fracturing is used in virtually all oil and gas wells in Colorado. Accordingly, banning fracking in Ft. Collins effectively banned oil and natural gas production there, at least under standard industry practices.

Home Rule Is Limited

The court affirmed Ft. Collins is a “home rule” city with the full right of self-government on local and municipal matters. However, the court explained, that right does not apply to issues of mixed local and state concern.

Oil and natural gas production, including fracking, are just such a “mixed” issue, the court ruled, as evidenced by Colorado’s Oil and Gas Conservation Act giving the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission authority to regulate oil and natural gas drilling throughout the state.

State Law Preempts Local Ban

The court ruled the Ft. Collins fracking ban is implicitly preempted by the Oil and Gas Conservation Act. The court observed the commission has enacted comprehensive oil and gas drilling regulations across the state.

“The five-year ban on hydraulic fracturing substantially impedes the state’s significant interest in fostering efficient and equitable oil and gas production,” the court stated.

In addition, “The City’s five-year ban conflicts with the Oil and Gas Conservation Act because it prohibits what the Act expressly authorizes the Commission to permit. Section 34-60-106 (2) (b) gives the Commission the authority to regulate the ‘shooting and chemical treatment of wells,’ along with a host of other means to comprehensively regulate the development and production of oil and gas wells in Colorado,” the court explained.

By Alyssa Carducci

Gov. John Hickenlooper and other influential Colorado Democrats announced they are pulling their support from November ballot initiatives that would severely restrict oil and natural gas production using hydraulic fracturing.

In addition to imposing extensive setbacks in residential areas, the initiatives would give local communities authority to ban fracking.

The opposition of the state’s most highly visible Democrats appears to have crushed the prospects for the initiatives, which were likely a long shot in the first place.

Polis Pressures Legislature

Colorado state Rep. Jared Polis (D-Boulder) served as the primary force in getting the initiatives on the November ballot. Polis said he wanted far-reaching regulations and restrictions on fracking and was disappointed legislators and environmental officials had not imposed the restrictions he seeks.

Polis launched and financed the initiatives to pressure state officials, saying he would withdraw support only if they addressed his concerns.

Democrats Caught in Crossfire

The Colorado legislature concluded its session in May without reaching an agreement, setting the stage for a November vote.

Hickenlooper and other Democrats began feeling pressure to strike a deal after Republicans used the unpopular proposed restrictions as a wedge political issue. A Quinnipiac poll found only 34 percent of Coloradans overall, and 32 percent of self-described independents, oppose fracking. A University of Colorado study found fracking would bring the state economic benefits.

Republican U.S. Senate candidate Cory Gardner hammered Democratic U.S. Sen. Mark Udall for failing to vigorously oppose the initiatives.

“If an energy ban is passed in Colorado, it will overnight wipe out 120,000 jobs, $12 billion of our economy, $1 billion of taxes that fund new roads and new schools,” said Gardner in a media interview, citing the University of Colorado study.

As Gardner’s attacks eroded Udall’s popularity, Udall moved to oppose the initiatives. Hickenlooper, who is also seeking reelection this year, likewise began suffering political damage and worked hard to forge a compromise that would keep the initiatives off the ballot.

Hickenlooper Controls Committee

Under the compromise, Hickenlooper will appoint an 18-member panel to study and make recommendations to the legislature. Presumably, the legislature would give substantial deference to the committee’s recommendations.

The compromise appeared to placate incumbent state legislators who feared the initiatives would harm their prospects in the November elections. The natural gas industry also approved.

Hickenlooper’s Republican opponent in the November election, Bob Beauprez, said the compromise resolved nothing and merely kicked the can down the road. “What happened is that this just creates more uncertainty,” said Beauprez.

The Coloradoan noted the compromise gives Hickenlooper authority to choose panel members, which could lead to political mischief.

“The formation of a blue-ribbon panel could be an inclusive and transparent boost to this process. But Hickenlooper also surely recognizes that this commission does not necessarily ensure that the will of the people of Colorado are [sic] represented. Nor is an appointed commission necessarily accountable to the public,” the Coloradoan explained.

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Tampa’s Rooftop Solar Panels Fail to Meet Promises

By James M. Taylor

Rooftop solar panels installed at the Hillsborough County Courthouse in Tampa, Florida are producing less than half their promised power, county records reveal.

Rather than lowering electricity costs, as promised, the poor-performing solar panels are causing a dramatic increase in electricity costs.

**Huge Savings Promised**

In 2010, federal and Hillsborough County officials launched the project to place solar panels on the Hillsborough County Courthouse. Government officials said the panels, costing $1.2 million, would pay for themselves in electricity cost savings. Officials claimed the panels would provide at least 40 percent of the building’s electricity needs and save more than $60,000 per year in electricity costs.

Hillsborough County maintains a website where people can view the real-time solar energy produced by the panels as well as an ongoing tally of the panels’ lifetime electricity production. According to the website, the solar panels are producing less than half their promised electricity and are reducing the courthouse’s electricity bill by only $27,000 per year.

**Taxpayers Taken for a Ride**

WFTS News in Tampa obtained copies of the courthouse’s electricity bills and confirmed the savings are no more than about $2,000 per month. WFTS also confirmed the panels are reducing electricity bills by only 15 to 18 percent, instead of the promised 40 percent.

At $27,000 per year, it would take 45 years to recover the solar panels’ costs. Accounting for inflation, it would take closer to 50 years to recover the costs.

Solar panels have a typical lifespan of only 15 to 20 years, and the effectiveness of the panels decreases throughout the panels’ lifespan. The Hillsborough County Courthouse solar panels are likely to return only about one-third of their inflation-adjusted cost.

**County Director No Longer Supports**

Hillsborough County Energy Director Randy Klindworth, who initially supported the solar panel project, told WFTS he would no longer support spending taxpayer dollars on such projects.

“I’ve got to be careful how the county spends taxpayer money. I want to be very wise in how we do that, make sure we get the good return on investment,” Klindworth told the reporter.

**Very Few ‘Green Jobs’**

Federal taxpayers paid for most of the $1.2 million cost as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, also known as the Obama stimulus. The measure was billed as a cost-effective way to produce jobs during a time of rising unemployment. According to Hillsborough County officials, the $1.2 million courthouse solar panel project produced 12 jobs that lasted only four months.

In 2010, local politicians eagerly lined up for the news cameras to take credit for purportedly saving taxpayers money through the solar panels.

“If I’d like to welcome and thank everybody who has come out this morning to help us celebrate Hillsborough County’s government going solar,” said Hillsborough County Commissioner Kevin Beckner at an October 2010 press conference.

“It is so wonderful to see the Recovery Act at work in our community, creating jobs and saving money” said U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor (D-Tampa).

“This is a nice initiative that will allow the county to put a little money back into the pockets of taxpayers at a time that they need it most, and to create jobs,” Castor added.

“Hillsborough County is a great example of how the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program is being utilized across the country,” said U.S. Department of Energy grant project officer Jennifer Holman at the press conference.

“Very Few ‘Green Jobs’”

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program is one of the signature programs of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act,” said Holman.

Preston Trigg, director of administration and special projects for the Hillsborough County Tax Collector’s Office, Pat Frank, county clerk of the Hillsborough County Circuit Court, Hillsborough County State Attorney Mark Ober, and Hillsborough County Commissioner Al Higginbotham also spoke at the press conference to take credit for the predicted electricity cost savings.

None of these politicians and public officials has accepted responsibility for the failed promises or explained why the program has been such a failure.

If Not Florida, Where?

The failure of the Hillsborough County Courthouse solar panels to return even half their cost bodes poorly for solar panel projects in other cities and states. Florida is the southernmost state in the continental United States, and the Hillsborough County Courthouse used the most advanced solar panels available. Solar projects in other states will not have these advantages.

“It is the most advanced solar product on the market to date for an environment of this application,” said Andrew Tanner, president of EcoSolar, at the press conference.

“It is very light-sensitive and can produce energy at low-light levels, including the moon,” said Tanner.

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Greenpeace Blasts China’s Coal Plans

By Bonner R. Cohen

Greenpeace sharply criticized China for unveiling ambitious plans to construct 50 coal gasification plants.

The gasification plants will reduce air pollution relative to conventional coal power plants, but Greenpeace claims 1.1 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions the gasification plants will produce is unacceptable.

Addressing Air Pollution

China’s major cities, most notably Beijing and Shanghai, have notoriously poor air quality. In September 2013 the government announced plans to build cleaner coal gasification (coal-to-gas) facilities. As currently envisioned, the bulk of the plants will be located in the less densely populated northwest of the country, including Xinjiang, western Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, and Gansu.

China’s state-owned power companies classify coal gasification plants as “clean energy” or “new energy,” and Chinese officials tout the plan as a sign Beijing is serious about reducing air pollution in urban areas.

Climate Trumps Clean Air?

But Li Shuo, a climate analyst with Greenpeace East Asia, asserted the plan will do more harm than good.

“China risks a boom in a destructive, expensive, and outdated technology, which could undermine its efforts on climate change and further damage its environment,” the July 24 New York Times quoted Shuo as saying.

Water Concerns

Coal gasification is a water-intensive means of producing electricity, and there are concerns the arid and semi-arid regions of western and northwestern China where the plants are to be located may not have enough water to allow the facilities to function properly.

“Around 80 percent of the predicted output of SNG (synthetic natural gas) of the 50 plants will come from areas of high or extremely high water risk—areas of high demand or low supply,” Greenpeace argues on its website.

The scarcity of water also has slowed China’s development of vast hydrocarbon reserves in shale formations in western China. Water is a key component in the process of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) used in extracting oil and natural gas from shale formations.

More Coal Use

Greenpeace claims carbon dioxide concerns should rule out pollution-reducing SNG power plants. It cites a 2013 study in Nature Climate Change in which researchers from Duke University report greenhouse gas emissions from SNG are 36 to 82 percent higher than conventional coal power. Greenpeace also says coal-to-gas uses more coal than traditional coal-fired plants. It concludes replacing coal with coal-to-gas will lead to higher carbon dioxide emissions.

Researchers at China’s Tsinghua University agreed, concluding the Chinese government’s plan will increase coal use in China.

Coal accounts for 70 percent of all energy used in China and 80 percent of all Chinese electricity generation. According to the Climate Central website, “In just 5 years, from 2005 through 2009, China added the equivalent of the entire U.S. fleet of coal-fired power plants, or 510 new 600-megawatt coal plants.”

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates China will add the equivalent of a new 600-megawatt coal power plant every 10 days for the next 10 years.

“Greenpeace claims to care about air pollution, but when China advances a cost-effective plan to deal with the problem, all Greenpeace talks about is carbon dioxide emissions, not the cleaner air that will result from China’s plan,” said Jay Lehr, science director for The Heartland Institute, which publishes Environment & Climate News.

Greenpeace views China’s coal use as the failure of Chinese coal plants to install basic pollution control equipment that is required in the United States and has assisted the dramatic reduction in U.S. air pollution during recent decades, Lehr noted.

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Anti-Fossil Fuel Activist Tom Steyer Got Rich on Coal Stock, Pipelines

By Kenneth Artz

Billionaire anti-fossil fuel activist Tom Steyer amassed his fortune through investing in coal mines and oil pipelines, investment records reveal.

As co-managing partner in Farallon Capital Management, Steyer supervised billions of dollars in investments in fossil fuel producers from Australia to Indonesia to Canada.

Financing Asia’s Coal Boom

In Indonesia and Australia, Farallon funded projects instrumental in Asia’s recent coal boom.

In Indonesia, for example, Farallon invested heavily in three large coal companies, helping Indonesia quadruple its coal production between 2002 and 2012 and become the world’s leading coal exporter. In Australia, Farallon invested in a company developing one of the nation’s largest untapped coal deposits.

In Canada, Farallon invested in companies building pipelines to deliver oil from Alberta’s oil sands to the West Coast and possible export.

Making Money Came First

As co-managing partner, Steyer had extensive say over Farallon’s investments.

People familiar with Steyer’s management said “he would have signed off on those foreign deals and, as co-managing partner, would have shared in their profits,” the Washington Free Beacon reported.

“He made us a lot of money and his attitude has always been ‘whatever it will take to make money,’” according to a former Farallon investor, as reported by the Free Beacon.

Hypocrisy After Cashing Out

Since cashing out of Farallon in 2012, Steyer has spent millions of dollars targeting elected officials in the United States who support conventional energy such as coal and oil. He is also one of the most vocal opponents of the Keystone XL pipeline and has funded efforts to block its construction.

“He made millions off of helping provide low-cost energy to Asia, but now wants Americans to pay higher energy prices by not using low-cost natural gas, coal, and oil,” said Daniel Simmons, vice president for policy at the Institute for Energy Research. “It appears that now that Steyer is a billionaire he cares little for the average American who has to deal with high energy prices.”

Investments Debunk Green Myths

Seton Motley, president of the public policy organization Less Government, said Steyer’s investment record shows “the billionaire understands affordable, unreliable conventional energy is the key to economic growth and prosperity.

“This highlights the inconvenient truth that you can’t make any money off of ‘green’ energy unless the government is writing you a check,” said Motley.

“If Tom Steyer all of a sudden a true believer? I don’t know, but I do know that money chases ideas, not the other way around,” said Motley.

Seen as Selfish Acts

Energy and environment consultant H. Sterling Burnett said Steyer is cut from the same cloth as other “do-something” liberals such as George Soros and Michael Bloomberg. He appears willing to spend his personal fortune on his causes, even those that appear to contradict his investment interests.

“People like Steyer, who are very wealthy and who are willing to risk a portion of their wealth on causes, have made their money, and they are not concerned with whether pipeliners and oil well mechanics still have their jobs. They’re more concerned with keeping their playground to themselves so they can fly their private jet to some pristine river to go fly-fishing for trout,” said Burnett.

“What would be interesting is to find out if he still has or directs investments in coal energy. If he still has these investments, he may just be cynically attempting to make more money by restricting new sources of coal, thus making his own coal holdings more valuable,” Burnett explained.

Energy economist Tom Tanton, principal of T2 & Associates, said he believes Steyer is more interested in self-enrichment than environmental causes.

“For a long time, I thought Tom Steyer was simply misinformed about what the climate is doing, and the mostly natural drivers of climate change. More recently, I’ve come to understand he’s no different than any of the other rent-seeking crony capitalists. His hypocrisy, claiming somehow his spending is ‘noble’ while others is not, simply denies millions of people from having affordable energy,” Tanton said.

Kenneth Artz (iankenartz@hotmail.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.
EPA Forced to Retreat on Radiation Exposure Limits

By James M. Taylor

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is raising by a factor of 350 what it considers to be the threshold for safe radiation exposure, Jon Utley reported on Reason.com.

The higher threshold belatedly rectifies overly restrictive standards that have cost thousands of lives and billions of dollars, Utley reported.

Tsunami, Not Reactor, Was Deadly
Utley documented how the Fukushima, Japan earthquake, tsunami, and subsequent nuclear power plant meltdown illustrated through adversity how safe nuclear power is.

The earthquake and tsunami killed more than 15,000 people, but the nuclear power plant meltdown killed no one and did not cause a single serious illness. Tragically, however, unjustified radiation fears proved deadly: 1,600 people died during a chaotic and unnecessary evacuation of the region.

Costly Overreaction
Despite the Fukushima nuclear safety success story, Japan closed 48 nuclear power plants and Germany announced it would close all of its nuclear facilities. The cost to their citizenry, Utley explained, is higher electricity prices and more air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions.

“The cost to U.S. citizens is staggering as well,” Utley observed. “Ultra-low [radiation] limits have delayed and prevented the construction of new nuclear power plants, added billions to the cost of refurbishing old reactors and Superfund clean-up sites, scared Nevada residents into opposing the opening of the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste storage facilities, and triggered panic whenever there has been a slight increase in radiation almost anywhere for any reason.”

EPA Acknowledges Mistake
EPA is at last acknowledging it has imposed unjustifiably strict radiation limits and is proposing to raise the limits. “Equally important, the EPA change brings attention to the issue that economic costs can be considered in its rulings. Historically, EPA denies this premise based upon its original mandate, which does not call on the agency to consider economic costs, it claims,” wrote Utley.

“The yearly cost of unnecessary EPA regulations is in the many hundreds of billions of dollars, reducing wages and hurting the world’s standard of living.”

—Jon Utley, Reason.com

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—Jon Utley, Reason.com

Bureaucracy vs. the Environment

Aquanomics
Water Markets and the Environment
Edited by B. Delworth Gardner and Randy T. Simmons
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“Gardner and Simmons have brought together an important book in Aquanomics. Given massive population and urban expansion in the last century we must face up to the challenge of potential ‘water crisis’ of immense importance. . . . [W]e must face up to them and this book does so clearly and with substantial depth.”

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—Lee J. Alston, Professor of Economics, University of Colorado

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“Re-Thinking Green challenges the reader to consider whether the existing approach to environmental regulation has been effective and if some other strategy may be better suited to achieve environmental protection goals. . . . very interesting.”

—Journal of Environmental Quality
Risky Business: Best Global Warming Alarmism That Money Can Buy

By Paul Chesser

The billionaire triumvirate of Tom Steyer, Henry Paulson, and Michael Bloomberg introduced its ballyhooed Risky Business report on the climate this June, and after all the op-eds, blog posts, and public interviews so far, all that can be said about it is that it is already an empty, meaningless PR campaign upon which the financial hotshots have wasted their money.

Logical scrutiny of the project, from its genesis to its outcome, reveals how deeply flawed and biased it is. Given the contributing factors it considers, there is no other verdict that would have been reached other than “we must all do something about global warming!” Yet the legacy media has treated Risky Business as something objectively conceived and having delivered perfectly reasonable conclusions.

That is to be expected from pack journalists who don’t look beyond the climate crystal balls (also known as “models”) spoon-fed to them by big-government scientists, but that doesn’t mean (and hasn’t in the past) that the public will swallow it.

Activist Founders

Let’s start with the founders of Risky Business. They portray their effort as nonpartisan (Fortune called it “scrupulously nonpartisan”), striving to show the project is represented by Democrats and Republicans alike. At the co-chairman level the Democrats are Steyer and Bloomberg, and the Republican is Paulson. Although Bloomberg ran twice for mayor of New York City as a Republican (and once as an independent), he was a registered Democrat before that.

A tip for discerning public policy consumption: If the proponents use the word “nonpartisan” as part of the pitch for their work, then they are likely pushing a controversial agenda that they have attempted to sell with personalities drawn from both major political party affiliations. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of crony capitalists, government interventionists, and science ignoramuses in both the Democratic and Republican parties, and finding the players from both sides is pretty easy. So a peek under the packaging is necessary.

Steyer is the driver. Risky Business is staffed by his nonprofit group Next Generation, whose primary mission is to mitigate the “risk of dangerous climate change.” Besides the “educational” nature of his think tank, Steyer has thrown his considerable resources into the election (or re-election) of Democratic candidates via his SuperPAC NextGen Climate. His policy priorities in the global warming fight are the revival of cap-and-trade and opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline. He pledged (but so far has miserably failed) to raise $50 million to match his own $50 million in contributions to climate-conscious candidates.

Bloomberg is the quintessential nanny-statist, so he’s perfect to join the leadership of a group that seeks to dictate what kinds of energy the masses may use. As mayor of New York City he sought to control how citizens consumed soda, trans fats, and cigarettes, and since then has poured millions of dollars into gun control initiatives. He said, “big cities must take the lead in reducing the threat of climate change” and pushed the well-worn “green” and “sustainable” themes.

Paulson’s Ethical Woes

That leaves Paulson the Republican to enable Risky Business to make its claim of “nonpartisanship,” at least among the co-chairmen. The former CEO of Goldman Sachs pushed for the government bailout of failing financial institutions when he was Treasury secretary under President George W. Bush.

Paulson’s nomination was opposed by National Legal and Policy Center President Peter Flaherty in May 2006 over an apparent conflict of interest in chairing both Goldman Sachs and The Nature Conservancy. As NLPC stated at the time, in part:

“In November 2005, Goldman Sachs adopted an ‘Environmental Policy’ that closely parallels the Nature Conservancy agenda on key issues like global warming. Moreover, Paulson’s son Merritt is a trustee of a Nature Conservancy-related group that was the recipient of a Goldman Sachs donation in the form of a tract of land totaling 680,000 acres in Chile.

“In his remarks at the annual meeting, Flaherty also noted that the Nature Conservancy has been mired in scandal in recent years, as detailed in a Washington Post series and in Senate hearings. The group sold ecologically sensitive land at a discount to its own trustees on which they built multimillion-dollar vacation homes, and structured land donations so wealthy donors could improperly receive tax breaks.

“Flaherty said, ‘There remain unanswered questions about Paulson’s personal and business ethics. At Goldman Sachs, Paulson promoted his own personal interests at the expense of shareholders. As Treasury Secretary, will he promote the public interest, or his own?’”

Conventional AlARMIST Positions

Paulson’s wife, Wendy, also has served on the board of The Nature Conservancy. In 2011 Paulson established the Paulson Institute at the University of Chicago, which promotes economic growth and “environmen-
will have absolutely no effect on his lifestyle. He walked away from Goldman with almost a half-billion dollars. He would, however, reduce the standard of living for just about everyone else.

Another Layer of Activism

Another layer of leadership to which the faux adjective “nonpartisan” is applied is Risky Business’s “Risk Committee Members,” which includes prominent Democrats Henry Cisneros, Robert Rubin, and Donna Shalala, and Republicans George Shultz and former Maine Sen. Olympia Snowe. Here too the GOP participation can hardly be classified as coming from the conservative mainstream of the party.

We are apparently expected to acknowledge the authority of this cast of characters—the co-chairs of the “Risk Committee”—based on their wealth and power. We are then expected to swallow the research they’ve produced, which is billed as “an independent assessment of the economic risks posed by a changing climate in the U.S.” The possibility that there might be no “risk” (at least, not any more “risk” than there has been in the past) is not a consideration, of course, because then they wouldn’t have called the project “Risky Business.”

Predetermined Alarmism

Hence it isn’t a surprise they called upon two firms that are all about finding supposed hazards and catastrophes. According to the Risky Business website, Steyer, Bloomberg, and Paulson “tasked” the Rhodium Group, a firm whose expertise is analysis of “disruptive global trends,” to evaluate the economic effects from climate change. They also called upon Risk Management Solutions (RMS), the “world’s largest catastrophe-modeling company for insurance, reinsurance, and investment-management companies around the world.”

Clearly, forecasting there would be no disasters as the result of global warming was not an option. Nor was challenging the premise that there has been a planetary temperature increase in the first place—even though there haven’t been any warming for nearly 18 years. It follows that Rhodium Group chose alarmist climate scientists Dr. Robert Kopp of Rutgers University as lead scientist for Risky Business.

“My scientific and policy research interests are guided by the recognition that, over the last two centuries, human civilization has become a geological force,” Kopp writes in his autobiographical information. “We are inducing planetary environmental conditions like those that Earth has not experienced for millions of years.”

Those are the kinds of things you hear from the alarmist world. This is the foundation on which Risky Business builds economic extrapolations in order to convince the business world to account for global warming.

Those deductions are based on—you probably guessed it—econometric models. So the thesis of global warming leads to all kinds of assumptions in the Risky Business report about yields for various (but not all) crops, mortality (but not quality of life), labor production, and even violent crime. Thanks to the collaborative nature of the Internet, a ridiculously long list of things supposedly caused by global warming—supported by source links—has been compiled. Revealing that to the experts behind Risky Business could send them back to fiddle with their models.

But all the “scholarliness” doesn’t matter; there is no humanly possible way to account for all the variables and contingencies, climatically or economically, to accurately forecast the future. The point of Risky Business is not to deliver sound conclusions based on reliable data, but only to appear to be doing so. Putting out reports with lots of formulas, coefficients, technical jargon, and footnotes accomplishes that task.

Predictable, Costly Prescriptions

It is with that “authority” that Steyer, Bloomberg, and Paulson (but mostly Steyer) hope to apply pressure to the business world. On the Risky Business website, the “Next Steps” they advocate involve business adaptation, investor adaptation, and public-sector response.

In all the categories the goals are clear: Businesses and governments must spend exorbitant amounts of money for adaptation to, and mitigation of, the effects of global warming. As a result the co-chairs want greater demands for reporting on these “actions” in boardrooms and shareholder meetings across the country.

The Risky Business co-chairs have taken their message to the public over the last month, with Steyer trying to hit up donors, Paulson writing for the New York Times, and Bloomberg promoting it through his media business. They’ve thrown gobs of money to create the appearance of an intellectual, scientific authority on both the science and economics of global warming. Investors and corporate executives should be aware of this scheme to distort their companies’ financial reporting and bottom lines.

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EPA Blames Texas for Illinois Air Pollution

By H. Sterling Burnett

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is blaming power plants in Texas for Illinois air pollution and is using the accusation to justify restrictions on Texas power plants.

EPA claims its cross-state pollution rule, intended to protect communities in one state from pollution drifting from other states, justifies placing restrictions on Texas power plants EPA claims are polluting Granite City, Illinois.

Several states have challenged EPA’s asserted authority to enact and enforce the cross-state rule, but two months ago the U.S. Supreme Court upheld it. Nevertheless, the Court ruled individual states can challenge specific applications of the rule if a state believes EPA is restricting emissions beyond what is necessary to prevent its contribution to another state’s air pollution.

Louisiana, Texas, and Wisconsin took the Supreme Court up on its offer and filed challenges to EPA applications of the rule.

EPA’s assertion that Texas power plants are causing Illinois pollution raised eyebrows for several reasons.

Granite City is approximately 500 miles from the Texas border and even farther away from the state’s major metropolitan regions. Granite City is northeast of Texas, with prevailing winds rarely trekking in that direction from Texas. A local steel mill, an important source of the town’s prosperity since the 1890s, has long been recognized as a primary source of air pollution in Granite City.

EPA, however, claims it has devised computer models that indicate some sulfur dioxide from Texas power plants may reach Granite City.

“Texas was only included in portions of the rule based on the projected impact on a single county in Illinois. And the air quality monitor in Illinois which EPA claims had the fingerprints of Texas pollution on it was located right next to a smelter.”

KATHLEEN WHITE, DIRECTOR, ARMSTRONG CENTER FOR ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT
TEXAS PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION

Under EPA’s cross-state pollution rule, electric utilities will be forced to install expensive scrubbers to reduce emissions from smokestacks. Alternatively, they can join a 28-state trading program in which they can purchase credits to cover their emissions. If neither of those two options is feasible, they can cut back production, mothball, or retire coal-fired power plants to achieve the limits.

State officials and utility executives predict the final option will be the most likely outcome.

H. Sterling Burnett, Ph.D. (info@heartland.org) writes from Dallas, Texas.
California Senate Rejects Fracking Ban

By Kenneth Artz

The California Senate declined to pass SB 1132, a bill that would have imposed a statewide ban on energy production using hydraulic fracturing methods.

The vote marked the second time in two years California’s Democratic-controlled state legislature rejected a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking.

Fracking Shores Up Economy

Senate opponents of the ban noted the economic benefits fracking provides. In a state suffering nearly 8 percent unemployment and some of the highest electricity prices in the nation, oil and natural gas production offers promise of economic recovery in the state.

David Quast, California director of the pro-energy group Energy in Depth, in testimony before the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources said the petroleum industry supports approximately 95,000 direct jobs and more than a quarter of a million indirect jobs in California. Quast said advances in fracking technology and new oil discoveries in the Golden State promise many additional jobs in years to come.

Quast cited a California State University-Fresno study reporting development of the Monterey Shale formation could lead to as many as 195,000 new jobs in the San Joaquin Valley and boost personal income there by $22 billion by the year 2030. Expanding energy production could be the beginning of an economic renaissance in a region suffering from crippling, double-digit unemployment, he said.

Environmental Questions Answered

Daniel Simmons, vice president for policy at the Institute for Energy Research, says there are few if any questions regarding asserted environmental impacts from hydraulic fracturing. Simmons noted EPA officials repeatedly have testified under oath that they have never found a single instance of the hydraulic fracturing process causing water pollution.

“The California Senate did what they should have done and rejected a ban on hydraulic fracturing,” said Simmons. “They realized there were no environmental benefits to the proposed ban and only economic downsides.

“Bans on hydraulic fracturing are not really about hydraulic fracturing, but these bans are an attack on affordable, reliable energy,” Simmons added. “More than a million wells have been hydraulically fractured without contaminating any groundwater. This means the opposition to hydraulic fracturing isn’t about environmental concerns, it’s about limiting Americans’ access to abundant energy sources.”

Struggling Economy Plays Role

Seton Motley, president of public policy organization Less Government, said California’s economic troubles prevented Democratic legislators from sacrificing future job growth and wealth creation to appease environmental extremists.

“If this were the sixth year of a booming economy, the state legislature might get away with a moratorium on fracking. However, there are just too many economic benefits flowing from hydraulic fracturing, and that’s why moderate Democrats are voting against moratoriums,” said Motley.

Energy economist H. Sterling Burnett said the California legislature’s openness to fracking is interesting because environmental activists have long held powerful influence over state legislators.

“The one big thing in fracking’s favor is California has had a long experience with oil and gas drilling. Also, the state has had a very bad economy, so this is a great source of revenue. Fortunately the legislators are seeing the bigger picture,” said Burnett.

“What this all comes down to is money. The California legislature wants to fund so many government programs, but it doesn’t have the money to pay for everything. Some of the legislators have come to realize that fracking can help them with some of their pet programs,” Burnett explained.

Kenneth Artz (iamkenartz@hotmail.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.
crush U.S. energy production and boost the Middle Eastern share of the energy market.

Fears ‘America Will Be Energy-Efficient’
“If Washington, DC continues fracking, America will be energy-efficient, and they won’t need our oil anymore,” Muhammad tells Begley, Hemingway, and Tickell.

Muhammad’s agent tells the three activists, “My motive is … I’m trying to help his bottom line.”

“That’s fine, we get that,” Tickell reassures the ad executive.

“You’re in with us on this, Ed, right?” Muhammad asks Begley.

“Oh yeah!” Begley replies.

Imperative to Hide the Funding
“Knowing where this money comes from …” the ad executive begins to say, “is only at this table,” Hemingway inserts.

“This table, that doesn’t go further than this table,” the ad executive continues.

“No, absolutely. I would never say that,” Begley agrees.

Glitter Trumps Truth
“Washington and Hollywood are a lot alike; illustrations, special effects, smoke and mirrors,” says Begley, describing his films and his anticipated anti-fracking advocacy.

“As long as it looks good to the eye, it doesn’t matter!” says Muhammad.

“Exactly! Washington and Hollywood are very similar that way,” replies Begley.

‘End American Energy Independence’
The video then shows Muhammad’s ad executive on the phone with Tickell.

“My client’s interest is to end American energy independence. Your interest is to end fracking. And you guys understand that?” asks Muhammad’s ad executive.

“Correct! Yes, super clear!” replies Tickell.

Using Nonprofits as Shills
“We’re confident that we can keep this zip-locked. You know, tight, tight, airtight forever. If we don’t protect who is kind of funding this thing, if we have to disclose that or that becomes a necessary part of it, the whole enterprise will not work.”

JOSH TICKELL, FILM PRODUCER

“We don’t want the Keystone pipeline to be built. But guess who else? Environmentalists. So it’s one of those things where the enemy of my enemy is my friend and we hang out,” says the ad executive.

Throughout the ad executive’s explanation of his desire to curtail American energy independence, Tickell is repeatedly heard saying, “mm-hmm,” “yeah,” and “that’s awesome.”

“We also work with a lot of people that are leading [the] anti-fracking movement in the United States professionally. They headed up a lot of the anti-fracking movement in upstate New York,” brags Tickell’s wife and co-activist Rebecca Tickell.

Art Imitates Life
O’Keefe, as studio narrator, explains there is precedent for Hollywood accepting Middle Eastern money to curtail American energy production.

“Movies like Promised Land were funded by the government of the United Arab Emirates,” O’Keefe observes.

“Promised Land,” says Tickell, “was trying so hard not to be a message film because imagine Abu Dhabi stamped on the front of the film and everyone is like, ‘OK, we know why you paid for it.’”

“So, rather than putting that [Middle Eastern funding] up front, don’t mention that,” warns Tickell.

“You know, tight, tight, airtight forever,” Tickell adds.

“If we don’t protect who is kind of funding this thing, if we have to disclose that or that becomes a necessary part of it, the whole enterprise will not work,” Tickell warns.

In the video, Tickell explains the role prominent environmental activist groups would play to keep the funding and motives a secret from the American public.

“So essentially, whatever—however—we did this, it would be essentially housed inside of a group of nonprofits and fairly high-profile people who are already in the movement and who are already working along the movement,” says Tickell. “So for all intents and purposes, anybody looking from the outside at this will see all people involved cast working for, working with the movie, and will be like, ‘Oh, well, we can see—we do see where the funding is coming from. It came from all of these.’ They will make the assumption.”

Unparalleled Influence
Tickell, a producer who won an award at the Sundance Film Festival in 2008, brags, “There is no other production company in America that has that kind of deep reach into the environmental movement, and I’m not buttering our own toast.”

“We have some clients in the Middle East who are very anti-fracking, very anti-American oil interests, but it’s because it cuts into their bottom line.

“Yeah, oh yeah, don’t broadcast it,” says the ad executive. “It’s just between us.”

Tickell laughs loudly and then says, “And then you can make a gutsy, ballsy, powerful film that Hollywood will respect for actually saying something. Then they get behind it.”

Naming the Sellouts
O’Keefe observes, “When asked if environmental partners would be willing to be paid off …”

“Environment California and Code Blue,” says Rebecca Tickell.

“And the NRDC [Natural Resources Defense Council],” Josh Tickell quickly adds.

“They would work with us on this film,” says Rebecca Tickell.

‘We Would Never Tell’
In a follow-up telephone conversation, the Tickells emphasize how important it is for everybody to keep the Middle Eastern funding a secret.

“We would never tell about where the funding is coming from,” says Rebecca Tickell. “That would be really awkward for us.”

“We would never include that in any communication between Rebecca, myself, you,” promises Josh Tickell.

Alyssa Carducci (ad.carducci@gmail.com) writes from Tampa, Florida.

INTERNET INFO

*Exposé: Hollywood’s War on U.S. Energy,* Project Veritas, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0XSehFF7I
An Embarassingly Bad Argument for Wind Power in Kansas Newspaper

By James M. Taylor

Wind power supporters serially embarrass themselves by making claims that wouldn’t even make the multiple-choice options for “Are You Smarter than a 5th Grader?”

Whether economic illiteracy, political mendacity, or some other reason is to blame, the following is an example published July 25 by a newspaper in Kansas.

Patrick Lowry at the Hays Daily News wrote an article, “Against the Wind,” about staffers for Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback (R) wordsmithing Brownback’s statement that he would like to see the Sunflower State phase out its renewable power mandates. Lowry used this news hook to try to make a case for continued subsidies to wind and solar companies. He comes up woefully short.

Does Not Compete with Oil

Lowry began his wind power shilling by claiming the primary objective of people who don’t want to be forced to purchase expensive wind power is “protecting long-standing interests of the oil industry.” Oil, however, is rarely used for electricity production. Oil is used to power motor vehicles. Oil and wind power do not compete for market share in any sector of the economy.

The “long-standing interests of the oil industry” might be in play if putting a propeller beanie on a Mack truck would allow the truck to barrel uphill at 70 mph, but I am wagering even 99 percent of 5th graders know a wind propeller is no substitute for gasoline.

Harms the Economy

Lowry further claimed forcing consumers to purchase higher-priced electricity has “bolstered significantly” the Kansas economy.

“The relatively new wind energy business sector is reliant on subsidies, tax credits and forced mandates for energy companies to attract any private venture capital. It’s an expensive proposition, one that will not make it in the marketplace if left to its own devices. Not until that storage problem is solved. But that is precisely why the industry deserves taxpayer support. If turbines aren’t producing, there will be no research on how to maximize that energy,” Lowry argued.

Lowry acknowledged wind turbines “aren’t producing” enough to be economically competitive. He admitted Big Wind needs special “subsidies, tax credits and forced mandates” merely to remain in business. And somehow, forcing such an expensive failure of an industry on electricity ratepayers is good for the economy? Lowry never explains how this might be the case, largely because it simply cannot be true.

Future Affordability Irrelevant Today

Although Lowry believes government research investments in battery storage for wind power may someday make wind energy cost-competitive (despite decades of government and private research investments having already failed to do so), forcing expensive wind power on Kansas now, while any such elusive technological breakthroughs are still a pipedream, has done just the opposite of “bolster[ing] significantly” the Kansas economy.

“Forcing an expensive technology on electricity ratepayers has driven up the cost of living in Kansas much faster than would otherwise be the case. Making it harder for people to pay their bills lowers the state’s economic well-being.”

Don’t just wonder about global warming. Understand it.

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Biological Impacts is the fifth in a series published by The Heartland Institute for the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC). It found rising temperatures and atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are causing “no net harm to the global environment or to human health and often finds the opposite: net benefits to plants, including important food crops, and to animals and human health.”

Global media coverage of the latest report by the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) frequently included summaries of the NIPCC report and quotes from Heartland Institute experts. The Wall Street Journal, Investor’s Business Daily, The Hill, and Daily Caller were among the influential media outlets summarizing Biological Impacts in their coverage of the IPCC report, and how Biological Impacts demonstrates the shortcomings, walkbacks, and contradictions in the IPCC report.

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Biological Impacts, by Craig D. Idso, Robert M. Carter, and S. Fred Singer, is available for free online at climatechangereconsidered.org.

Order online direct from the publisher or go to Amazon. com, or call 312/377-4000.
Group Forces Catastrophe ‘Consensus’ on Schoolkids

This is the second in a two-part column on how the National Center for Science Education is targeting the nation’s schools to enforce a mythical consensus on global warming alarmism.

By Casey Luskin

Under scoring the mindset of anti-religious groups, in 1996 prominent scientist Richard Dawkins was declared the American Humanist Association’s (AHA) Humanist of the Year. In his acceptance speech he stated, “Faith is one of the world’s great evils, comparable to the smallpox virus but harder to eradicate.”

In 2009, the National Center for Science Education (NCSE) accidentally leaked talking points it provided for activists in Texas. The talking points stated, “Science posits that there are no forces outside of nature. Science cannot be neutral on this issue. The history of science is a long comment denying that forces outside of nature exist, and proving that this is the case again and again.” The document even encouraged activists to wax theological: “All educated people understand there are no forces outside of nature.”

Dr. Eugenie Scott, a physical anthropologist, insisted NCSE’s “goals are not to promote disbelief” but rather to push people to “understand evolution and hopefully accept it.” Nonetheless, she oblig ed to take a position—which led to the group’s involvement in the global warming issue.

In January 2012, the NCSE declared its plan to launch a “new initiative to defend and support the teaching of climate change” and to oppose “climate change denial.” In December of that year, NCSE hosted a Climate and Energy Literacy Summit in Berkeley, California. The summit brought together approximately 50 “climate activists” representing think tanks (Brookings Institution, Frameworks Institute, Will Steger Foundation), environmentalist groups (Campaign for Environmental Literacy, Alliance for Climate Education, BlueGreen Alliance, Climate Nexus, Social Capital Project, Ecological Society of America), education organizations (National Science Teachers Association, Technical Education Research Centers), philanthropy (Nonprofit Finance Fund, Carnegie Museum), journalism (National Geographic), scientific societies (American Geophysical Union), federal and state agencies (National Science Foundation, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Global Change Research Program), and the National Academy of Sciences.

According to a summit report, their goal was to develop a “coordinated national initiative” to “substantially and measurably improve climate and energy literacy,” with “literacy” defined as a belief that “human activities are warming the planet, that the resulting climatic changes have serious consequences, and that steps can be taken to minimize negative impacts.” The initiative aimed to dramatically increase the number of teachers who cover climate change and to assist educators “in coping with climate science denial, including scientific rebuttals and guidance on best practices for countering denial and manufactured doubt.”

(“Denial” and “manufactured doubt” are terms used by environmental extremists to denigrate scientists and others who express skepticism on the global warming issue, likening such skeptics to Nazi sympathizers, heretics, or unscrupulous Madison Avenue ad men.)

The summit report made clear that cash was critical to the “climate literacy” effort. Central to the initiative was raising both public and private funding from government sources such as the NSF, NOAA, and NASA as well as from private foundations. The money would go to help develop curricula and to put pressure on schools to “become living laboratories for climate and energy studies” so that “most students in the nation could attain basic climate and energy literacy in less than a decade.”

The involvement of religious leaders and members of environmentalist or “social justice” groups was encouraged. NCSE’s website laments, “People and organizations who deny or doubt the scientific consensus around climate change have attempted to undermine climate change education.”

‘Call to Arms’ Against Skeptics

Since launching its Climate Change Initiative, NCSE staffers have published articles in prominent journals encouraging scientists to serve as advocates. Writing last year in BioScience, NCSE deputy director Glenn Branch issued a “call to arms” to biologists, saying, as with creationism, “It is time for biologists to help resist the danger posed by climate change denial, too.”

He charged, “Unlike evolution, climate science is not yet comfortably ensconced in the K–12 educational system; there is a lot of work to do before it is.”

Today, roughly a year and a half after the Berkeley summit, NCSE serves as a hub, coordinating efforts through the schools to persuade students and the general public to accept the supposed “consensus.” Citizen Engagement Laboratory, a summit participant, openly admits the agenda is to “strive to make those who deny climate science or stand in the way of action politically toxic.”

Casey Luskin (cluskin@discovery.org) is an attorney with a graduate degree in earth sciences and serves as research coordinator for the Discovery Institute in Seattle, Washington. This article was first published by the Capital Research Center, reprinted with permission.
Denton, Texas City Council Rejects Fracking Ban

By H. Sterling Burnett

The city council of Denton, Texas rejected a proposed citywide ban on producing oil and natural gas through hydraulic fracturing techniques.

Hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking, entails injecting water, sand, and small amounts of other chemicals deep underground under high pressure to open seams in rock formations, thereby releasing oil and gas deposits for production.

Denton sits atop the Barnett shale formation, one of the most productive natural gas deposits in the nation.

Had the ban passed, it would have been historic, making Denton, a city of 121,000 people, the first Texas city to ban fracking. Having failed at the city council level, anti-fracking activists have put a fracking ban on the November ballot. To do so, the activists produced a petition signed by fewer than 2,000 people.

EPA Finds No Pollution

Frack-Free Denton, the group behind the petition, claims fracking jeopardizes the environment and can threaten human health.

Federal, state, and local officials have tested thousands of water sites throughout the country near fracking sites. President Barack Obama’s former EPA administrator, Lisa Jackson, has repeatedly acknowledged under oath that EPA has never identified a single instance of the fracking process polluting groundwater.

Gary Stone, vice president of engineering for Five States Energy Capital, said, “Study after study shows fracking results in no health threats either from the process itself or from the production of oil and natural gas. If oil and gas production caused significant health problems, we should expect to see people in the Permian basin and Midland and Odessa constantly walking around in gas masks, if not full hazmat gear.”

Threatening Economic Opportunity

Should the voters approve the ban, Denton will have to forgo the billions of dollars in salaries, economic development, and tax revenue provided by oil and natural gas production.

“These unfounded concerns threaten not only tax revenues for the city, county, and state, but royalty payments to landowners as well,” Stone noted.

Kathleen White, director of the Armstrong Center for Energy & the Environment at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, agreed a fracking ban would be economically calamitous for Denton.

“A recent report by the Perryman Group estimated if Denton were to ban fracking, this would cost the city over 2,000 jobs and $254.1 million over the next 10 years,” said White.

Anti-fracking activists hope for a victory in the November election, while energy supporters express strong confidence voters will reject the ban.

Neither side, however, expects the vote to be the final word on the matter. If the ban passes, landowners, energy producers, and other groups will likely challenge the city’s authority to ban a practice authorized and regulated by the state. (See “Colorado Court Overturns Ft. Collins Fracking Ban,” this issue.) If the ban is rejected, anti-fracking activists and environmental groups likely will follow the example of activists in other states and take to the courts to challenge fracking.

H. Sterling Burnett, Ph.D. (info@heartland.org) writes from Dallas, Texas.
New Book Documents Hydraulic Fracturing’s Promise for America

Groundswell: The Case for Fracking
by Ezra Levant

Review by Jay Lehr, Ph.D.

The new book Groundswell is a highly recommended read. It is more an economics and politics book than a science treatise, and there are plenty of issues in fracking economics and politics to discuss. In an easy conversational writing style, Ezra Levant powerfully debunks a litany of myths regularly asserted by anti-fracking activists.

New Promise for Proven Technique
Levant quickly dismisses the idea that hydraulic fracturing is anything new, noting the technique was first used on a vertical well in 1947 by Standard Oil and Gas Corporation, which patented the process in 1949. He also provides an illuminating discussion of horizontal drilling, which has gone hand-in-hand with hydraulic fracturing to launch our nation’s recent oil and natural gas renaissance.

Levant provides a bent-straw analogy to explain how a drill string turns over and ends up drilling horizontally, following a shale seam for thousands of feet instead of vertically for hundreds of feet. The modern process was first tried 10 years ago in a well in the Barnett Shale in Texas.

Levant notes fracturing has revived America’s oil and natural gas industries, turning the United States into the Saudi Arabia of natural gas. The word “revolution” is tossed around liberally, but it truly fits our natural gas renaissance. He quotes a 2013 Goldman Sachs report stating fracking will give the United States an economic advantage in the world energy market for years to come.

Of greater importance, the Goldman Sachs report recognizes it is not just energy we are talking about, but also the positive impact of affordable and abundant energy on steel, metals, chemicals, infrastructure, and other industries that are massive users of energy. The United States once dominated world production of these goods, and Levant explains how fracking will allow the United States to regain that position.

The nation will soon be able to end its energy imports that provide funding to hostile nations, Levant notes. Success, however, will require a presidential administration willing and able to pursue our advantages. Thus Levant lashes out at the Obama administration for essentially doing everything possible to stifle this new energy revolution.

Burying ‘Peak Oil’
Levant decimates “peak oil” alarmists with oil production facts that blow away the silly idea that oil production is headed for an imminent, precipitous decline. He remains neutral on global warming alarmism, saying regardless of what one thinks about global warming predictions and claims, widely available, inexpensive natural gas offers an affordable, effective means of reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Unlike crude oil, for which there is global transportation and trade, natural gas does not have an integrated global market. The author notes natural gas in Poland sells for $14.90 a million BTUs, $10.80 in Germany, $8.90 in the UK, and $4.00 in the United States. This is because it is more difficult to liquefy natural gas and ship it overseas than oil. However, there will soon be close to 200 facilities in the United States liquefying natural gas for overseas sales—if politicians don’t get in the way.

Nightmare for Russia
Levant’s chapter on Russia’s Gazprom energy company progresses like a James Bond novel, complete with Gazprom playing the villain and trying to hold Europe hostage with its vast energy supplies.

State-owned Gazprom is very worried about hydraulic fracturing in the United States, and the Russian government’s asserted concerns about environmental threats are transparently ridiculous. Russia and Gazprom justifiably fear a continuing rise in U.S. natural gas production will lessen Russia’s energy stranglehold on the European continent.

Environmental Claims Debunked
In a sobering and depressing lesson about the goals and global influence of environmental extremist groups, Levant lists the vast quantities of natural gas in shale formations around the world that cannot be developed because of political opposition and the influence of environmental activists on governments.

Anti-fracking activists are able to block fracking in many of these nations because government owns all the mineral rights and therefore can be used by activists to shut down fracking. Private property rights in the United States will give us a competitive advantage over these nations for decades to come.

One of the favorite attacks made by anti-fracking folks is the assertion that fracking uses large amounts of water. Levant offers voluminous statistics to prove water use by fracking is a drop in the bucket compared to the amount used to water lawns, irrigate agriculture, or produce ethanol.

He also explains why there is virtually no risk of hydraulic fracturing causing any meaningful pollution of groundwater. In addition to it being almost impossible for fracking compounds to migrate vertically through hundreds or thousands of feet of impermeable rock to reach the water table, hydraulic fracturing compounds are more than 99 percent water and sand and are actually drinkable.

Levant closes his excellent book with detailed descriptions of each European nation’s potential for shale gas development and the many nefarious groups working successfully to hold back progress. This provides an advance roadmap of which European nations are poised to join us in our energy renaissance if they have the political will to stand up to environmental extremists.

Groundswell is an easy and enlightening read about America’s newest success story. Jay Lehr, Ph.D. (jlehr@heartland.org) is science director of The Heartland Institute.
This forthcoming book brings together greats from among the world’s climate scientists and some of the most astute observers and participants in the public debate.

The many facets of climate change theory are examined and measured against scientific observations. The book comes to the inescapable conclusion that claims of human-induced climate change are, at best, seriously, over-hyped. It demonstrates that measures to staunch global emissions of greenhouse gases will prove to be unworkable. Such measures will also cripple those economies in which they are introduced.

Due to be published August 2014. To register your interest email Rachel Guy at rguy@ipa.org.au

For more information visit https://thefacts2014.ipa.org.au

**GLOBAL SATELLITE TEMPERATURES**

**HOW MUCH GLOBAL WARMING?**

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/t2lt/uahncdc_lt_5.6.txt](http://vortex.nsstc.uah.edu/data/msu/t2lt/uahncdc_lt_5.6.txt)

**JULY 2014**

**GLOBAL AVERAGE**

The global average temperature for July was 0.30°C above average.

**NORTHERN HEMISPHERE**

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

**SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE**

The Southern Hemisphere's temperature was 0.31°C above average.

**219,000 years of Temperature Variation**


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