Energy & Environment

Adopting a Pro-Environment, Pro-Energy, Pro-Jobs agenda would produce millions of jobs and billions of dollars in income while more effectively protecting the natural environment than is currently being accomplished by a massive federal bureaucracy and intrusive regulations. Specifically,

1. Create a President’s Council on Climate Change, modeled after the President’s Council on Bioethics created by President George W. Bush in 2001 (and sunset in 2009), charged with cutting through the politics and bias that infected climate science and policymaking during the Obama administration and advising the President on what policies to repeal and what policies to pursue. Like the Council on Bioethics, the new council should include respected experts outside the cabal of government scientists who were exposed as partisan and unethical by Climategate and many independent researchers.

2. Withdraw from the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the more recent Paris Accord and end funding for the United Nations’ biased climate change programs, in particular the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Green Climate Fund.

3. Approve Keystone XL and other pipelines blocked by President Obama.
4. Replace EPA with a Committee of the Whole of the 50 state environmental protection agencies. Those agencies already have primary responsibility for implementing environmental laws passed by Congress and regulations written by EPA.


6. Withdraw implementation of the Waters of the U.S. rule.

7. Roll back unnecessary regulations on hydraulic fracturing and oil and gas exploration offshore and on federal lands.

8. Roll back recent EPA regulations on ozone, small particles, and other air pollutants that are based on discredited epidemiology and toxicology.

9. End the climate profiteering in America’s energy sector by ceasing billions of dollars a year in direct and indirect subsidies to wind and solar companies. Require them instead to compete with fossil fuels on a level playing field.

10. Dramatically reduce government funding of climate change research pending the findings of the new President’s Council on Climate Change. When funding for such research resumes, require that equal amounts go to studying natural and man-made climate change.

11. Dramatically reduce government funding of environmental advocacy groups, including funds delivered to such groups through the “sue and settle” scam.

12. End the use of “secret science” by EPA and other regulatory agencies, conflicts of interest on scientific review boards, and reliance on epidemiological studies and climate models that are known to be flawed and unscientific. Enforce the Data Quality Act in regards to the junk science promoted and funded by EPA on air pollution and toxicology.

13. Roll back Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards, which result in the deaths of thousands of car and truck passengers every year, needlessly increase the price of new cars, and favor foreign car manufacturers.

**Education**

Under the U.S. Constitution, K–12 education is a state and local responsibility, not a federal one. A Trump administration should sharply reduce the federal government’s involvement in K–12
and higher education – not because education isn’t important, but because it is too important to entrust to the federal bureaucracy. Specifically,

14. Eliminate the U.S. Department of Education. If this is not politically possible, then block-grant most or all of the department’s funding back to the states. Preserve and restore state and local autonomy by repealing federal regulations and red tape attached to federal funds.

15. Withdraw the national government’s endorsement of Common Core State Standards by ending government support of the failed experiment and de-linking federal funding currently attached to it.

16. Restore funding of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program, which Congress failed to fund in 2015 – or, even better, endorse education savings accounts for all students in the District.

17. End the Obama administration’s war on for-profit higher education, which recently led to the demise of a school that provided affordable education to some 40,000 students. For-profit colleges and universities should not be held to higher standards than nonprofit schools.

18. Reduce federal subsidies to higher education, whether direct for research and other programs, or indirect via student scholarships and loans. Such subsidies have led to higher tuition fees and featherbedding by colleges and universities.

**Budget & Taxes**

Adopt the plan set forth in *Power to the People* by Peter J. Ferrara, a senior fellow with The Heartland Institute, to promote economic growth, save Social Security and other entitlement programs from bankruptcy, and provide those most in need with the world’s best health care. Specifically,

19. Support a plan similar to the Ryan Roadmap or Path to Prosperity plans to balance the budget in 10 years. A balanced budget is absolutely essential if we are to stop digging even deeper the hole created by recent massive deficits.

20. Cut the corporate tax rate from 35 percent – the highest in the industrialized world – to 15 percent, to help bring jobs back to the United States.

21. Support the A Better Way personal income tax reform plan (simplification and flattening) to dramatically simplify the tax code and reduce rates for most Americans, fueling more work and wealth creation.
22. Support repatriation of profits held abroad by multinational corporations. Allow companies to bring trillions of dollars in profits held overseas back to the United States to invest and create jobs here. Tax those dollars at a rate possibly as low as 5.25 percent instead of the current 35 percent.

**Health Care**

Obamacare has been a disaster. It has resulted in huge increases in insurance premiums and loss of competition and choice in health care markets. Unless repealed and replaced, it will destroy the world’s best health care system. Specifically,

23. Stop the current administration’s plan to use a special U.S. Department of Justice fund to funnel billions of dollars to insurers without congressional approval.

24. **Repeal and replace Obamacare.** Republicans have detailed plans to repeal and replace Obamacare with policies that genuinely reduce health care costs and expand access to care, such as a universal health insurance tax credit, block-granting Medicaid to the states, risk pools for the uninsurable, and expanded health savings accounts (HSAs).

25. **Block grant Medicaid** back to the states. In the short term, approve any waivers from states wishing to reform their Medicaid programs.

26. Make prescription drugs more affordable by giving patients, with the approval of their doctors, access to new drugs as soon as clinical trials show they are safe but before they pass remaining tests for efficacy. Adopt the plan described in [Free to Choose Medicine](#) by Bart Madden.

27. **Privatize the Veterans Administration.** Veterans are being denied quality health care by an unaccountable and bureaucratic jungle. Give veterans vouchers they can use to buy health care at the same hospitals and clinics chosen by other citizens.

**Constitutional Reform**

The federal government is out of control. The national debt currently stands at nearly $19 trillion and will surpass $20 trillion in 2017. The regulatory state is similarly out of control. The President and Congress won’t take action that limits their own power and status. It is up to the people to demand constitutional reforms, initiated either by Congress or by the states under Article V of the Constitution, that restore the checks and balances and basic freedoms the Founders thought were protected by the Constitution they wrote. Specifically,
28. Nominate Supreme Court Justices who are committed to preserving the Constitution as intended by the Founding Fathers, not interpreting it to fit the wants and interests of today’s interest groups and political correctness.

29. Repeal many of Obama’s executive orders and all of them that stretch or exceed the constitutional authority of the Office of the President. Executive orders ripe for repeal include those affecting environmental protection, trade, health care, immigration, and foreign policy.

30. Clearly establish that deference to agencies on the interpretation of statutory language is not a license to violate Administrative Procedure Act prohibitions on agency actions that are arbitrary and capricious. Adopt a policy and custom that Congress shall no longer allow executive agencies to exercise legislative authority and power.

31. Encourage Congress or the states to approve a constitutional amendment repealing the Sixteenth Amendment (income tax).

32. Encourage Congress or the states to approve a constitutional amendment imposing term limits on members of Congress.

33. Encourage Congress or the states to approve a constitutional amendment allowing a majority of states to nullify any federal regulation.

34. Encourage Congress to pass and then sign into law the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act, which would require congressional approval of all major rules.

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Please direct any questions or suggestions about this document to Joseph Bast, president, or John Nothdurft, government relations director, The Heartland Institute, phone 312/377-4000 or by email to jbast@heartland.org or jnothdurft@heartland.org.