



Anti-Science Climate Denier Caucus

114th Congress

After the warmest year in recorded history, a shocking number of congressional Republicans—more than 56 percent—continue to deny or question the science behind human-caused climate change.¹

As it returns to the nation's capital, the new Republican-controlled Congress has made it clear that it has no intention of prioritizing action on climate change. In fact, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and the new head of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-OK), have vowed to stop the Environmental Protection Agency's, or EPA's, attempt to curb carbon pollution and slow the devastating effects of climate change.⁶

Iowa

During the 2014 campaign, several then-candidates sought to paint the conversation around climate change as a scientific debate. "So I don't know the science behind climate change," said newly elected **Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA)**. "I can't say one way or another what is the direct impact, whether it's man-made or not. I've heard arguments from both sides."⁷ Below are additional members of the Iowa caucus who also doubt the science behind climate change:

Rep. Rod Blum (R-IA-01): Rep. Blum said, "Well, it's interesting. I can see why the average citizen is skeptical about this. I guess you can put me in that camp. I'm skeptical ... I'm not a scientist, and I know most scientists' paychecks come from the federal government, and so right away that makes me a bit skeptical. Thirty years ago we were going into a global cooling period. That makes me skeptical."⁸

Rep. Steve King (R-IA-04): Rep. King said, "Everything that might result from a warmer planet is always bad in [environmentalists'] analysis," Rep. King said. "There will be more photosynthesis going on if the Earth gets warmer ... And if sea levels go up 4 or 6 inches, I don't know if we'd know that."⁹



Here are the facts:

Ninety-seven percent of climate scientists agree that current human activity is contributing to the warming atmosphere and causing the global climate to change.²

One hundred sixty-nine Republicans in the 114th Congress are on record questioning or denying the science behind climate change.³

Fifty-three percent—or 131 members—of the House Republican caucus question or deny the science behind climate change.⁴

Seventy percent—or 38 members—of the Senate Republican caucus question or deny the science behind climate change.⁵

Rep. David Young (R-IA-03): Rep. Young said, “I’ve seen, like a lot of people, credible studies on both sides of this issue. I do know one thing for sure: We need to use sound science and not put this into a political science box. We need to make sure also that if this is going to be put through public policy, it needs to not be done unilaterally through this administration, through executive order, or by the EPA.”¹⁰

Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA): Sen. Grassley said, “But the scientific aspect that I’m still reserving judgment on is the extent to which it’s manmade or natural. And it’s reasonable, considering that there’s at least a natural factor in it, because historically, and you can go to the core drillings in the glaciers to get proof of this, that we’ve had decades and decades, and maybe even centuries of periods of time when there’s been a tremendous rise in temperature, and then a tremendous fall in temperature. And all you’ve got to do is look at the little ice age of the mid-last millennia as an example. And so we’ve got to single out what’s natural and what’s manmade before you can make policy.”¹¹

Endnotes

- 1 Joe Romm, “2014 Was the Hottest Year On Record Globally By Far,” *ClimateProgress*, January 5, 2015, available at <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2015/01/05/3607735/2014-hottest-year-by-far/>; Tiffany Germain, Kristen Ellingboe, and Kiley Kroh, “The Anti-Science Climate Denier Caucus: 114th Congress Edition,” *ClimateProgress*, January 8, 2015, available at <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2015/01/08/3608427/climate-denier-caucus-114th-congress/>.
- 2 Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet, “Consensus: 97% of climate scientists agree,” available at <http://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/> (last accessed January 2015).
- 3 Germain, Ellingboe, and Kroh, “The Anti-Science Climate Denier Caucus.”
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Timothy Cama, “Senate GOP steeling for battle against EPA,” *The Hill*, November 9, 2014, available at <http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/e2-wire/223398-senate-gop-steel-for-battle-against-the-epa>; Timothy Cama, “Senator maps strategy against EPA rules,” *The Hill*, January 7, 2015, available at <http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/228826-senator-maps-gop-strategy-against-epa-rules>.
- 7 James Hohmann, “Bruce Braley, Joni Ernst tear into each other,” *Politico*, September 28, 2014, available at <http://www.politico.com/story/2014/09/bruce-braley-joni-ernst-debate-2014-iowa-senate-elections-111409.html>.
- 8 Lindsey Moon and Katherine Perkins, “Candidate Profile: Rod Blum,” *Iowa Public Radio*, May 29, 2014, available at <http://iowapublicradio.org/post/candidate-profile-rod-blum>.
- 9 Joe Sutter, “King: Global warming ‘not proven, not science,’” *The Messenger*, August 7, 2013, available at <http://www.messengernews.net/page/content.detail/id/569000/King--Global-warming--not-proven--not-science-.html?nav=5010>.
- 10 Rob Dillard and Katherine Perkins, “Candidate Profile: David Young,” *Iowa Public Radio*, May 22, 2014, available at <http://iowapublicradio.org/post/candidate-profile-david-young>.
- 11 Office of Sen. Chuck Grassley, “News Conference Calls: Grassley Agriculture News Conference,” *Wayback Machine*, available at https://web.archive.org/web/20090827024431/http://grassley.senate.gov/news/news_conference_calls.cfm (last accessed January 2015).