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Inglis tells students of signs of warming at South Pole
Core samples of ice tell tale, congressman says in call to schools

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Although it's not nearly as dramatic as what he saw in Greenland last summer, there is ample evidence that the Earth is getting warmer at its coldest spot, in Antarctica, U.S. Rep. Bob Inglis told Greenville County high school students in a phone call from the southern hemisphere Friday.

"Some detractors say the science isn't settled," the Greenville Republican said from Christ Church, New Zealand, a day after leaving the icy continent. "There have been ups and downs (in temperature), but it's on this trend line that has gone dramatically up."

A former skeptic of global warming, Inglis told students at Greenville and Riverside high schools that he was convinced by studies done on the mile-thick ice layers in Antarctica that leave a record of the planet's climate going back thousands of years.

"What you see is a fairly constant fluctuation (in carbon-dioxide levels) and then you get to the Industrial Revolution and it starts climbing," he said in response to a question asked by Carrie McClenaghan, a student in Fanya Paouris' marine science class at Greenville High. "And it climbs substantially."

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Inglis was part of a delegation from the House Science and Technology Committee on the trip to check progress on National Science Foundation projects in the U.S. Antarctic Program.

The group also inspected a new South Pole Station just two weeks before its grand opening, as well as a new \$19.2 million South Pole Telescope that is being used to study "dark" energy, forces that may help explain gravitational effects.

He had originally planned to call from the McMurdo Research Station in Antarctica a day earlier but decided to hold off until Friday because there wasn't sufficient Internet bandwidth to run the slide show of photos he took on the

trip from there.

It was Inglis' second trip to the bottom of the world. This time, he joined his son Robert, who is spending five months there working for a contractor.

As in his first trip two years ago, Inglis made it all the way to the South Pole itself -- and sent photos of him and his son standing next to it as proof.

"We walked around the world really quickly," he said of the few steps it took to circle the Earth's southernmost point.

Inglis also fielded questions on government spending on the environment and national energy policy, saying he supports a carbon tax as a way to control pollutants that contribute to global warming.
