

**Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman**  
**July 27, 2006**

Today, the Subcommittee holds only the third hearing on global warming in the Energy and Commerce Committee since the Republicans took over the House of Representatives in 1995. The majority intends this to be a continuation of the second hearing, which was held last week. In that hearing, the Republican majority attempted to discredit a respected climate scientist and a study he published eight years ago.

Not only is this use of the Subcommittee ridiculous and unfair, it is also a waste.

The magnitude and urgency of the global warming crisis demands a serious response from this body. We should be holding hearings to understand the ramifications of recent studies detailing the harmful effects of global warming that we are already seeing – from increased wildfires in the West, to more intense hurricanes, and more acidic oceans. We should examine the practical steps this Congress and the Administration must take to reduce global warming pollution. We should explore how best to reengage with the international community, as addressing this problem will require all countries to do their part. And we should investigate the well-funded effort by certain oil companies to manufacture controversy and cast doubt on the reality of global warming and the human contribution to it.

Sadly, the majority seems to have little interest in any of these legitimate hearing topics.

Yet despite its intended focus, today's hearing does give us the opportunity to learn more about the current state of climate science. I am looking forward to hearing the views of Dr. Ralph Cicerone, who is the President of the National Academy of Sciences and the Chairman of the National Research Council, as well as an eminent climate scientist. I am also very pleased that we will hear today from Dr. Michael Mann, who is one of the world's most distinguished paleoclimatologists.

Eight years ago, Dr. Mann and his colleagues published a groundbreaking study that reconstructed the temperature of the earth over the past 600 years using proxy data, such as tree rings. Since 2002, Dr. Mann has published another half dozen papers revising and building on this work. These later studies, as well many independent paleoclimate reconstructions by other scientists, continue to find the same thing – the warmer temperatures in the last few decades are unprecedented compared to anything we've experienced in the last 1,000 years.

The majority won't use this hearing to examine Dr. Mann's recent studies or the independent confirmation of its work. Instead, they want to focus exclusively on his original work in 1998 and 1999 because they think it has a statistical flaw.

The strategy isn't subtle. Because they think they have found a flaw in one study out of thousands, the majority wants to build the one study into the "pillar" of the scientific case for global warming. The Chairman's thinking seems to be that if he can discredit one climate scientist, Dr. Mann, he can cast doubt on all climate change research.

In effect, it's back to the tactics of the tobacco industry – manufacture doubt to delay action on an urgent problem.

Intimidation is also part of the strategy. This Subcommittee launched this campaign against Dr. Mann and several of his colleagues last year by demanding to know the source of funding for every study they had ever conducted and demanding that they turn over all of the data for all of their research. These bullying tactics drew highly unusual protests from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Academy of Sciences, and the Republican Chairman of the House Science Committee, among others.

This is why it's so important that Dr. Mann is here today. This Subcommittee will hear that the statistical approach Dr. Mann is being criticized for wasn't even used in his more recent papers. This Subcommittee will hear, as it did last week, how strong Dr. Mann's whole body of work and conclusions have been over time. The Subcommittee will hear, once again, that Dr. Mann's work has been independently replicated and published by others in peer reviewed journals. And the Subcommittee will hear about the many other completely independent lines of evidence that support the reality of global warming and the role of humans in causing it.

The scientific evidence of human contribution to global warming is clear and compelling. The only open question is how long certain members of this Subcommittee will keep pretending that it doesn't exist.