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SUBJECT:: Key Quotes on Climate -- 6/11/01 POTUS Speech and recent Climate Action Re

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----- Forwarded by Phil Cooney/CEQ/EOP on 06/06/2002
01:11 PM -----

Phil Cooney
06/06/2002 01:02:24 PM
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Group, Attached is a Key Quotes document, setting out the President's June 11 statement last year and several selected quotes from the Climate Action Report. Phil

Key Statements on Climate Change Science

President Bush, Rose Garden Speech, June 11, 2001:

"Concentration of greenhouse gases, especially CO₂, have increased substantially since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. And the National Academy of Sciences indicate that the increase is due in large part to human activity."

Quotes from the U.S. Climate Action Report 2002:

"One of the weakest links in our knowledge is the connection between global and regional predictions of climate change. The National Research Council's response to the President's request for a review of climate change policy specifically noted that fundamental scientific questions remain regarding the specifics of regional and local projections (NRC 2001). Predicting the potential impacts of climate change is compounded by a lack of understanding of the sensitivity of many environmental systems and resources -- both managed and unmanaged -- to climate change." (page, 6)

"While current analyses are unable to predict with confidence the timing, magnitude, or regional distribution of climate change, the best scientific information indicates that if greenhouse gas concentrations continue to increase, changes are likely to occur. The U.S. National Research Council has cautioned however, that "because there is considerable uncertainty in current understanding of how the climate system varies naturally and reacts to emissions of greenhouse gases and aerosols, current estimates of the magnitude of future warnings should be regarded as tentative and subject to future adjustments (either upward or downward)." Moreover, there is perhaps even greater uncertainty regarding the social, environmental, and economic consequences of changes in climate." ("The Science" box, page, 4)

"Greenhouse gases are accumulating in Earth's atmosphere as the result of human activities, causing global mean surface temperature and subsurface ocean temperature to rise. While the changes observed over the last several decades are due most likely to human activities, we cannot rule out that some significant part is also a reflection of natural variability." (page, 4).

"In its June 2001 report, the Committee on the Science of Climate Change, which was convened by the National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Sciences, concluded that "[h]uman-induced warming and associated sea level rises are expected to continue through the 21st century." The Committee recognized that there remains considerable uncertainty in current understanding of how climate varies naturally and will respond to projected, but uncertain, changes in the emissions of greenhouse gases and aerosols." (page, 81)

"These assessment studies recognize that definitive prediction of potential outcomes is not yet feasible as a result of the wide range of possible future levels of greenhouse gas and aerosol emissions, the range of possible climatic responses to changes in atmospheric concentration, and the range of possible environmental and societal responses." (page, 82)

"Because of these ranges and their uncertainties, and because of uncertainties projecting potential impacts, it is important to note that this chapter cannot present absolute probabilities of what is likely to occur. Instead, it can only present judgments about the relative plausibility of outcomes in the event that the projected changes in climate that are being considered do occur." (page, 82)

"Use of these model results is not meant to imply that they provide accurate predictions of the specific changes in climate that will occur over the next hundred years. Rather, the models are considered to provide plausible projections of potential changes for the 21st century.... For some aspects of climate, the model results differ. For example, some models, including the Canadian model [used in this Assessment] project more extensive and frequent drought in the United States, while others, including the Hadley model [the other model used in the Assessment] do not. As a result, the Canadian model suggests a hotter and drier Southeast during the 21st century, while the Hadley model suggests warmer and wetter conditions. Where such differences arise, the primary model scenarios provide two plausible, but different alternatives." (page, 84)