



THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND GLOBAL WARMING

RESPONSES TO BUSH ADMINISTRATION TALKING POINTS ON GLOBAL WARMING

September 26, 2007

- *This Administration has done more for the environment and addressing energy security and climate change than any other in history.*
 - This Administration has one of the worst records on environmental protection of any Administration in history. On global warming, the Administration has only recently shifted from outright denial and suppression of the overwhelming scientific evidence to foot-dragging and empty rhetoric. And on energy security, the share of imports in overall U.S. oil supply has increased from 53% to 60% since President Bush took office in 2001. President Bush's idea of energy security is to turn our wildlife refuges into gas stations while pleading with Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah to increase production when gas prices get too high, as he did in April 2005.
- *The President has devoted \$37 billion to climate change since 2001 and has requested \$7.4 billion more in 2008 for dozens of voluntary, incentive-based, and mandatory programs.*
 - In OMB's report to Congress detailing how this \$37 billion was spent, it becomes clear that the President's definition of "climate change programs and activities" comes from his own special dictionary. Included as "climate programs" are \$28 million for "modern energy services" in Afghanistan, \$750,000 for reduction of illicit coca production in Peru, \$1 million for Title II Food Aid for Honduras, \$1 million for anti-corruption reform in Cambodia, and \$1.3 million for agricultural sector productivity in Madagascar. You get the idea. The reality is that in 2006, CO2 emissions in the United States were 3% higher than when Bush took office. If the President were serious about global warming, he would start with measures to improve our energy efficiency. Policies that required improved automobile fuel efficiency, building insulation, and lighting system efficiency would reduce CO2 emissions by billions of tons while actually saving Americans money.
- *Since 2001 President Bush has consistently acknowledged that climate change is occurring and humans are a contributing factor.*
 - As recently as June of 2006, President Bush was still claiming – contrary to the overwhelming consensus in the scientific community – that there was a real

“debate” over whether global warming was “manmade or naturally caused.” Moreover, the Bush Administration has systematically suppressed scientific evidence and discussion of global warming, including attempting to muzzle government climate scientists like Jim Hansen and editing references to global warming out of reports by EPA and other government agencies. While the President now gives a rhetorical nod to the unequivocal scientific evidence that global warming is happening and humans are causing it, he still refuses to concede that CO₂ is a dangerous gas that could kill the planet. He appears to be unaware of the gravity of this crisis or the urgent need for bold action to reduce global warming pollution. His goals are “**aspirational**”, not binding, which is another way of saying that he hopes for a better future, but isn’t serious about doing anything about it. His aspirational approach is to remain conversational until he’s gone.

- *The President treats climate change seriously and is taking aggressive, yet responsible action to reduce our greenhouse gases based on the best available science.*
 - This Administration treats climate change as an issue that they can no longer ignore, so they intend to engage in a global filibuster. The best available science tells us that we are risking catastrophe if we do not cap our global emissions of heat-trapping gases. The Administration chooses to duck that reality and focus instead on what is convenient to do according to the best available corporate advice. As recently as 2006 the President was still expressing outright denial and suppression of the scientific evidence on global warming. Now he is foot-dragging and spinning empty rhetoric. The Administration has consistently opposed any policy that would actually mandate emissions reductions – both here in the United States and globally. Investment in R&D and incentives is great, but no major environmental problem in history has ever been solved through voluntary actions alone. Only policies with real teeth will provide the incentives we need to achieve the emissions reductions necessary to save the planet.
- *The President is committed to a portfolio of actions that fosters economic growth, achieves emissions reductions through technology investments, and includes developed and developing economies.*
 - The development of technology is greatly important, but we cannot sit around with our fingers crossed waiting for the magic silver bullet. We have technology solutions that can be deployed now. Fuel efficient automobiles, renewable electricity generation, and efficiency standards for buildings, appliances, and lighting will save Americans money while paving the way to growth in the new green economy. The time has come for President Bush to implement the policies that help deploy these technologies.

- *The President is working actively on programs in the U.S. and with international partners to first slow, then stop, then ultimately reverse the growth of greenhouse gas emissions.*
 - The President is working actively to slow, then stop, then ultimately reverse the progress of the EU and the UN to stop global warming. It hopes to substitute voluntary approaches that have failed in the past for approaches that are based on binding caps on the emissions of gases that are threatening the viability of the planet.
- *The President's policies are working – the U.S. is seeing the same rate of progress in slowing the growth of greenhouse gases, if not better, than European counterparts while experiencing robust economic growth.*
 - The Bush Administration's claim that the United States is doing better than the Europeans at slowing greenhouse gas emissions is not supported by the long-term data. From 1990 to 2004, the EU-15 reduced emissions by 1% while U.S. emissions grew by more than 15%. In any event, the real point here is that absolute emissions in the U.S. have consistently grown at an average of about 1% per year for the last 15 years. That's not going to get us where we need to go. There's no support for the notion that voluntary initiatives alone can achieve the kind of reductions we need in order to avoid dangerous global warming – on the order of up to 80% by 2050.
- *In 2006, it is estimated U.S. absolute CO2 emissions declined 1.3% while the economy grew 3.3%.*
 - The Bush Administration is taking credit for a warm winter. Relying on warm winters to solve the problem of global warming is like burning down your house to save money on heating bills. The Bush Administration likes to trumpet the 1.3% reduction in CO2 emissions in 2006. But the Administration's own analysis shows that reduction was just dumb luck. The Bush DOE's Energy Information Administration explained that the dip in emissions was caused by reduced energy use due to an unusually warm winter, high gasoline prices, and falling prices for natural gas causing switching to this fuel from higher emitting energy sources, among other factors. The Bush Administration's attempt to attribute this anomaly to its do-nothing policies on global warming is downright disingenuous. Bottom line: emissions have grown 3% under the Bush Administration.