



Policy Resolution 02.2020

Adopted on September 29, 2020

## **Commitment to Abundant and Reliable Low-Cost Energy**

### **Sponsor**

Senator Ed Emery, Missouri

**WHEREAS**, genuine air pollutants, known as “criteria pollutants” under the federal Clean Air Act (carbon monoxide, lead, ground-level ozone, particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide) are harmful to human health or to the environment at concentrations that may be generated by industrial activities in the absence of abatement measures; and

**WHEREAS**, atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide is currently approximately 420 parts per million (42 thousandths of 1 percent); and

**WHEREAS**, carbon dioxide, an odorless, colorless gas, is nontoxic at concentrations more than twenty times that concentration, and every human breath exhaled contains carbon dioxide at a concentration of approximately 40,000 parts per million (nearly 100 times the current atmospheric concentration); and

**WHEREAS**, it has taken over 200 years of activities such as burning fossil fuels, deforestation, and cement mixing to raise atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration from approximately 280 parts per million before the Industrial Revolution, by 140 parts per million (approximately 50 percent), to its present 420 parts per million, and it would take many centuries of such activities to raise carbon dioxide concentration to more than twenty times that concentration; and

**WHEREAS**, even burning all Earth’s known fossil fuels would not be sufficient to raise atmospheric concentration above about 2,000 parts per million, a level that it would take a thousand years or more to reach; and

**WHEREAS**, abundant, affordable, reliable energy is indispensable to lifting and keeping whole nations out of extreme poverty and the high rates of disease and premature death that invariably accompany it, and bringing them into sustained prosperity and the improved nutrition, good health, and lengthened life expectancies that accompany it; and

**WHEREAS**, fossil fuels—coal, oil, and natural gas—have been an excellent source of abundant, affordable, reliable energy and today account for approximately 85 percent of all primary energy consumed in the world; and

**WHEREAS**, emission controls on actually harmful pollutants from fossil fuels can keep ambient concentrations below threatening levels at a reasonable cost, and the further reduction of carbon dioxide emissions from them is extremely costly and does not impact public health; and

**WHEREAS**, many nations today remain in poverty, with the high rates of disease and premature death that accompany it, in large part because they lack abundant, affordable, reliable energy, and such nations are being discouraged from using fossil fuels out of unjustified fears of effects of the carbon dioxide emitted when fossil fuels are burned; and

**WHEREAS**, alternative energy technologies like wind and solar, because they are intermittent and their energy and power density are small fractions of the energy and power density of fossil fuels, are less affordable and less reliable than fossil fuels and therefore less capable of lifting and keeping nations out of poverty; and

**WHEREAS**, the growing contribution of wind and solar to electrical grids results in higher electricity prices and reduced reliability; and

**WHEREAS**, carbon dioxide is essential to human and animal life (regulating respiration) as well as plant life (photosynthesis) and therefore to all agricultural crops, which are essential to feeding the human population; and

**WHEREAS**, every doubling of carbon dioxide concentration in the air in which plants grow results in an approximately 35 percent increase in plant growth efficiency, allowing plants to grow better in warmer and cooler temperatures and in wetter and drier soils, improving the efficiency of their use of water and nutrients and their resistance to diseases and pests, and thus expanding their ranges into wider latitudes and altitudes and more varying soils, while improving their fruit-to-fiber ratios, so that one major review<sup>1</sup> of scientific studies of the effect of increased carbon dioxide on plant growth concluded that carbon dioxide added to the atmosphere from 1960 to 2012 contributed an additional \$3.2 trillion worth of agricultural harvests worldwide, and continued emissions can be projected to contribute an additional \$9.8 trillion by 2050; and

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<sup>1</sup> Craig D. Idso, *The Positive Externalities of Carbon Dioxide: Estimating the Monetary Benefits of Rising Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> Concentrations on Global Food Production* (Tempe, AZ: Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change, 2013), online at <http://www.co2science.org/education/reports/co2benefits/MonetaryBenefitsofRisingCO2onGlobalFoodProduction.pdf>.

**WHEREAS**, the growing human population needs a growing food supply, and the world's poor particularly need a more affordable food supply, and the effect of increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide on agriculture contributes to satisfying both of those needs; and

**WHEREAS**, fears of catastrophic global warming driven by carbon dioxide rest not on empirical observation, the key to science, but on computer climate models<sup>2</sup> that simulate global average temperature increase of approximately 1.5–4.5°C (2.7–8.1°F) at equilibrium (known as “equilibrium climate sensitivity”), which is thought to take about two centuries, for each doubling of atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration; and

**WHEREAS**, such climate models predict much more global warming than actually observed over the relevant period,<sup>3</sup> and their simulations can be made consistent with global average temperature over the past 150 years or so only by *ad hoc* adjustments of parameters (known as curve fitting); and

**WHEREAS**, such models therefore fail validation and provide no rational basis for any predictions of future global average temperature, any regional or local weather consequences of same, or any economic, public health, or national or international security consequences of same; and

**WHEREAS**, more empirically-based estimates of the amount of global warming that might be caused by increased atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration point toward an effect near or well below the minimal amounts simulated by the models; and

**WHEREAS**, attempting to mitigate global warming by curbing the use of fossil fuels would have little effect on warming while costing trillions of dollars while depriving people of the abundant, affordable, reliable energy necessary for prosperity, health, and long life (full implementation of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement has been estimated, using supporters' assumptions, to avert at most 0.17°C, or 0.3°F, of warming by the end of this century<sup>4</sup> at a cost of \$70 to \$140 trillion<sup>5</sup> or \$23.3 to \$46.6 trillion dollars per tenth of a degree Fahrenheit of warming averted); and

**WHEREAS**, in light of the above, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) decision in 2009 to treat carbon dioxide as a dangerous pollutant under the Clean Air Act (commonly known as the “CO<sub>2</sub> endangerment finding) was unjustified and has had serious negative impacts on Americans' wellbeing,

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<sup>2</sup> Governments around the world, and the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, rely on models included in what is called the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project, of which the sixth generation (CMIP6) is currently in development.

<sup>3</sup> Roy W. Spencer, “CMIP6 Climate Models Producing 50% More Surface Warming than Observations Since 1979,” online at [www.DrRoySpencer.com](http://www.DrRoySpencer.com). (Dr. Spencer is Principal Research Scientist in Climatology at the Earth Systems Science Center of the University of Alabama Huntsville and a NASA prize-winning climate scientist for his work managing satellite global temperature data.)

<sup>4</sup> Bjørn Lomborg, “Impact of Current Climate Proposals,” *Global Policy* 7:1 (February 2016), 109–118, online at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1758-5899.12295>.

<sup>5</sup> Bjørn Lomborg, “Gambling the World Economy on Climate,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 16, 2015, online at <https://www.wsj.com/articles/gambling-the-world-economy-on-climate-1447719037>.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that:**

1. The labeling of carbon dioxide as a pollutant under the Clean Air Act should be reevaluated using empirical data and with a full appreciation of the benefits to mankind and to the nature of increased atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide.
2. The EPA should review and reverse its CO<sub>2</sub> endangerment finding.
3. American states should be free to pursue mixes of energy sources as their legislatures, regulatory agencies, and governors deem wise, efficient, and cost effective and should not be forced or coerced by national policy or international agreements, to compromise their commitment to abundant, reliable and low-cost energy.

