

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

BETTINA POIRIER, MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR
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November 4, 2013

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

On multiple occasions, members of this committee have urged the Administration to be forthright when discussing climate science. For example, we have asked about President Obama's statements that "the temperature around the globe is increasing faster than was predicted even 10 years ago"¹ and that "the climate is warming faster than anybody anticipated five or 10 years ago."² Both statements are demonstrably false.

As you are aware, the climate forecasting models used by the IPCC as well as climate alarmists over the last twenty years have overestimated the extent of actual global temperature increases. This reality has been recognized by many publications, including the scientific journal *Nature*, but has not yet been acknowledged by this Administration.³ The most recent 15-year period without measurable warming occurred at a time of significant greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, emissions from developing countries exceeded what was originally incorporated into the models.

At your confirmation hearing on April 11, 2013, Senator Sessions provided questions for the record specifically asking for official predictions versus actual global temperatures. On April 30, 2013, you responded to Senator Sessions. Yet, instead of providing the requested analysis, including a chart showing official predictions versus actual global temperatures, you simply stated that "EPA has not produced its own analysis, but we expect a definitive comparison in the forthcoming [International Panel on Climate Change] Fifth Assessment Report."⁴ Even assuming that utilization of the IPCC report is an acceptable Agency action, based on the report's conclusions it is clear that the President's claims cannot be sustained.

¹ <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/14/remarks-president-news-conference>

² <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/30/remarks-president-dccc-event>

³ *Overestimated Global Warming over the Past 20 Years*, John C. Fyfe, Nathan P. Gillett and Francis W. Zwiers, NATURE CLIMATE CHANGE | VOL 3 | SEPTEMBER 2013

<http://www.see.ed.ac.uk/~shs/Climate%20change/Climate%20model%20results/over%20estimate.pdf>

⁴ Written Responses of EPA Administrator-nominee Gina McCarthy to Questions for the Record Submitted by Sen. Jeff Sessions, at Question No. 26.

It is clear that this Administration continues to downplay the reality of the current, 15-year hiatus in global temperature increases, as recently reported by the Associated Press (AP).⁵ The AP reports that several nations lobbied the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to select a specific conclusion to its latest report that accounts for the lack of global warming since 1998. According to the AP, the U.S. “urged the [IPCC] authors to include the ‘leading hypothesis’ that the reduction in warming is linked to more heat being transferred to the deep ocean.” It appears that the U.S. did not suggest an alternative conclusion that the models themselves were flawed. Moreover, it is concerning that at the same time you suggested to the Senate during your confirmation process that the IPCC’s latest report would endorse the President’s statements about global temperatures, the U.S. State Department was lobbying for the IPCC to incorporate their favored narrative to try to explain the failure of the IPCC climate models.

The failure of the IPCC climate models is obviously a great disappointment for the Administration and others demanding costly international and U.S. actions on the basis of catastrophic global warming. It isn’t simply the climate models that have been inaccurate, as outlined in a July 2013 report entitled *Critical Thinking on Climate Change* issued by the Senate EPW Committee Republicans.

Of particular interest in the recent AP report is that the United States government chose to ignore the flaws in the climate models and, instead, decided to lobby the IPCC to downplay the reality of a warming hiatus by asserting the possibility that the oceans had absorbed global warming. On the other hand, Germany apparently lobbied for the lack of warming to be wholly erased from the report, while Belgium wanted a completely new starting year for measuring data. When governments actually weigh in and request alterations to a scientific analysis in this manner, the message is clear that the IPCC process produces a political document, not a purely scientific one. Such actions exacerbate the declining reputation of the IPCC and highlight the need for the EPA to do its own analysis with a particular focus on transparency and a commitment to the Data Quality Act.

In light of the foregoing, we would respectfully request that you provide complete responses to the following questions:

1. When the President made his recent claims that “the temperature around the globe is increasing faster than was predicted even 10 years ago”⁶ and that “the climate is warming faster than anybody anticipated five or 10 years ago,”⁷ were you aware that the State Department was lobbying the IPCC to include an explanation in its report about the lack of measurable increases in global temperatures since 1998?
2. Please provide to the Committee any edits to the Summary Report submitted by the U.S. Government, including EPA’s input.

⁵ *Climate report struggles with temperature quirks*, Associated Press, September 19, 2013

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/warming-lull-haunts-authors-key-climate-report>

⁶ <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/11/14/remarks-president-news-conference>

⁷ <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/30/remarks-president-dccc-event>

3. What was EPA's involvement in the development of the new estimates for the Social Cost of Carbon?
4. Do you agree with the increased confidence of human influence on climate that is claimed by the latest IPCC report, even though global temperatures have not increased as was predicted in prior IPCC reports?
5. As shown in the attached report, *Critical Thinking on Climate Change*, extreme weather events like hurricanes and tornados are not, in fact, increasing, even though the Administration continues to suggest that they have. Why does EPA's webpage "Climate Change Indicators in the United States" claim otherwise?⁸ What scientific data is used to support this claim? How does the data upon which the claim is based comport with the Data Quality Act?
6. As you are aware, the climate has always and will always be changing. However, the aforementioned EPA webpage seems to contend that the climate simply started changing with the advent of the internal combustion engine and electrification. Please provide a list of periods in the earth's recorded and geologic history in which the climate was not changing.

Thank you for your attention to these questions.

Sincerely,



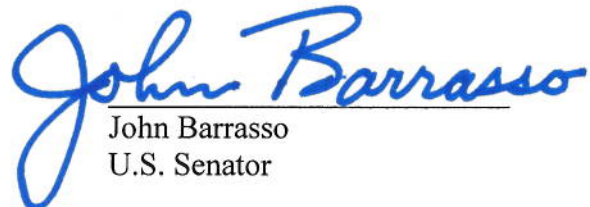
David Vitter
U.S. Senator



Jeff Sessions
U.S. Senator



James Inhofe
U.S. Senator



John Barrasso
U.S. Senator

⁸ <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/science/indicators/>