

**Examining the Role of Environmental Policies on Access to Energy and  
Economic Opportunity  
Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at 9:30 a.m.**

Today we have a very distinguished panel to discuss the real impacts of the President's climate policies are already having on the American people. In particular, I'd like to welcome Father Sirico, General Scales, and Alex Epstein for joining us.

During the State of the Union, the President said, "No challenge poses a greater threat to future generations than climate change." He's wrong. The far greater threat is what the Obama administration is implementing in the name of climate change. This administration has spent significant time and taxpayer dollars promoting a sense of fear and urgency around climate change, exploiting any recent, catastrophic event to justify Obama's economically devastating policies. For example, his statements tying terrorism to climate change are not only dangerous but demean the men and women who have pledged their lives to keep this country safe. His climate change policies aren't protecting this country – they're killing the coal industry, undermining our global competitiveness, putting thousands of Americans out of work while shipping their jobs overseas, and costing

hardworking taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars that will take generations to pay down.

Rhetoric aside, President Obama's climate policies have nothing to do with the environment. The EPA did not even bother to assess whether the so-called Clean Power Plan – the centerpiece of the President's entire climate agenda – would have any impact on the environment. In fact, it will cost hundreds of billions of dollars each year and have miniscule benefits that will be completely undone by a few months of economic activity in China.

The President's claims that his efforts are about protecting the health of this country or national security are equally disingenuous. In fact, they stand to undermine our economic well-being, which is the foundation of this country's domestic success and global respect. A Children's HealthWatch study from May 2013 found that high energy costs can cause families to go without needed medical care and increase the risk of eviction and homelessness.

Recently there has been a fad to demonize fossil fuels. But fossil fuel development has been a game changer for economic opportunity around the world and also is integral from a strategic military perspective. Fossil fuels help lift communities out of abject poverty. The aggressive regulating by the

Obama Administration to promote his climate change agenda, such as the Climate Action Plan and the Paris Agreement, will do more harm than good to vulnerable communities. Even the Pope has tried to turn climate action into an international moral imperative.

But whether you believe in climate change or not, it is in our best interest – from any perspective – to continue to use fossil fuels, because they are important to our economy, our military, and our quality of life.

But the existence of abundant, fossil fuel resources in this country alongside American ingenuity and innovation have fueled our path to becoming the global powerhouse we are today. The American people understand the value of fossil fuels, which is why they have consistently rejected costly climate policies, and Congress has acted accordingly.

Clearly, the true purpose of the President's climate policies have nothing to do with protecting the interests of the American people. Instead, they are meant to line the pocketbooks of his political patrons while promoting his self-proclaimed climate legacy.

I thank our witnesses for being here today and look forward to their testimony.