

OCT 2018

POLICY BRIEF

Climate
Solutions
Caucus Co-Chair
Carlos Curbelo



Summary

- The Climate Solutions Caucus (CSC) works hand-in-hand with the leftist Citizens' Climate Lobby.
- Any scheme to replace affordable conventional energy with expensive wind and solar power would severely punish consumers and the U.S. economy.
- Republican CSC members generally represent the far-left wing of the Republican Party and vote against conservative principles more than half the time.
- Joining the CSC will not win over any liberal voters, but it will demoralize and provoke the conservative Republican Party base.

The Congressional Climate Solutions Caucus: A Leftist Betrayal of Republican Voters

By James Taylor

Executive Summary

Members of the U.S. House of Representatives belonging to the Climate Solutions Caucus purport to seek reasonable approaches for dealing with an alleged global warming crisis and to promote “economically viable” options to restrict carbon dioxide. The 86-member Caucus is composed of an equal number of Democrats and Republicans and its Republican co-founder is Florida Congressman Carlos Curbelo.

The actions taken by Curbelo since he first started to recruit Republicans for the Caucus reveal a bait-and-switch strategy regarding the Caucus’s stated principles. Curbelo and the organization that gave birth to the Caucus, the Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL), promote costly carbon-dioxide (CO₂) taxes that will raise energy prices, punish U.S. consumers, and stifle the national economy. Such carbon-dioxide taxes directly contradict the values of the voters who nominated and elected Republican members of Congress.

Republicans who join the Caucus not only harm America’s economic well-being, they also risk creating political backlash that endangers their own congressional seats.

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This *Policy Brief* will make the following important points:

1. The Climate Solutions Caucus Was Born from the Left-Wing Citizens' Climate Lobby.

Lobby founder Marshall Saunders was inspired by Al Gore's film and convinced members of Congress to form the Caucus to promote his agenda.

2. The Citizens' Climate Lobby Advocates for a Costly CO2 Tax.

The tax would rise every year, and the purpose of the tax is to drive coal, oil, and natural gas out of the marketplace.

3. The Lobby Espouses a Radical Left-Wing Ideology.

Most CO2 tax advocates openly state they would use the revenues raised to promote "social justice" and other left-wing agendas.

4. The CO2 Tax Would Create a Tempting Slush Fund.

Some advocates hold out to Republicans that the tax could be revenue-neutral and rebated to taxpayers to offset higher energy costs, but such a scheme would create a slush fund of hundreds of billions of dollars that would likely be used to fund left-wing causes.

5. The Promise of a Revenue-Neutral CO2 Tax Is a Bait-and-Switch Scam.

Republicans have been maneuvered into

agreeing that something must be done about climate change and that a revenue-neutral CO2 tax would be a good approach to reducing carbon-dioxide emissions. However, when tax proposals inevitably stop being revenue-neutral and Republicans balk, they are damned as hypocrites.

6. The Tax Would Put America on the Road to Command-and-Control.

Many Republicans supported a CO2 tax as an alternative to heavy-handed government command-and-control. All of the advocates outside the Caucus insist the tax is merely one tool to be used in addition to heavy-handed regulation.

7. The CO2 Tax Would Impose Substantial Economic Harm.

In addition to the crippling tax burden it would impose, the CO2 tax would drive up energy costs, seriously harming U.S. industries and making them less competitive compared to low-wage countries such as China.

8. Emissions Reductions Are Unnecessary and Futile.

Without the imposition of the CO2 tax, anti-fossil-fuel regulations, or international agreements, CO2 emissions have declined in the United States because of American industrial innovation. Further, other industrialized countries add so much CO2 to the atmosphere each year that reductions created by an American CO2 tax would not have a measurable impact on global CO2 emissions.

9. Republican Climate Solutions Caucus Members Are Not Committed Conservatives.

Many Climate Solutions Caucus members are out of step with the values of their own party.

10. Caucus Membership Has Been Proven to Have Serious Election Day Consequences.

Polls and recent elections show that Caucus members endanger their House seats, as they are rejected both by GOP voters and the Democratic voters to whom they think they are appealing.

THE CAUCUS IS A POLITICAL OFFSHOOT OF THE CITIZENS' CLIMATE LOBBY, THE BRAINCHILD OF MARSHALL SAUNDERS, A WEALTHY LIBERAL ACTIVIST WHO WAS INSPIRED BY AL GORE'S MOVIE *AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH*.

1. The Climate Solutions Caucus Was Born from the Left-Wing Citizens' Climate Lobby.

The Climate Solutions Caucus bills itself as a bipartisan group of Republicans and Democrats in the House of Representatives seeking “to educate members on economically-viable options to reduce climate risk and protect our nation’s economy.” As of August 2018, there were 86 members of the Caucus, with 43 members from each political party.

The Caucus is a political offshoot of the Citizens' Climate Lobby, the brainchild of Marshall Saunders, a wealthy liberal activist who was inspired by Al Gore's movie *An Inconvenient Truth*. As Saunders described it, “I went

to see *An Inconvenient Truth*, and, you know, it all came crashing down on me. That was in 2006. I saw the movie three times in two weeks. ... I was just overwhelmed by what I saw.”¹

Saunders compares the “moral imperative” to flight climate change to ending racism, South African apartheid, and the British subjugation of India. As Saunders described his vision in a 2017 interview, “We are going to have the greatest social revolution of all time.”²

After being inspired by Gore's film, Saunders coordinated with left-ist activist groups such as the Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Union of Concerned Scientists to promote cap-and-trade restrictions on carbon-dioxide emissions.

The American public and a Congress with large Democratic majorities in the House and Senate rejected cap-and-trade restrictions in 2009.

Saunders then switched his tactics and began lobbying for CO2 taxes. To accomplish this new strategy, Saunders created the Citizens' Climate Lobby. The Lobby has both a non-profit 501(c)(3) arm as well as a 501(c)(4) arm, which can promote legislation. The Lobby's goal is to promote an extreme climate-alarmist agenda.

One of the Lobby's most important political achievements was convincing Rep. Ted Deutsch (D-Florida) and Rep. Carlos Curbelo (Florida) in 2016 to create the Climate Solu-

tions Caucus in Congress.³ Since that time, the Caucus and the Citizens' Climate Lobby have worked hand-in-hand on their mutual mission. The Citizens' Climate Lobby even hosts the Caucus's website.⁴

2. The Citizens' Climate Lobby Advocates for a Costly CO2 Tax.

The Citizens' Climate Lobby advocates for the immediate creation of a \$15-per-ton tax on CO₂, with annual increases of "at least \$10 per ton." The tax would instantly add 13 cents per gallon to the price of gasoline, with additional annual increases of at least 9 cents per gallon.⁵ The tax would add more than a dollar per gallon to the price of gasoline over the next decade, with similar price hikes on virtually all other forms of conventional energy.

Saunders made clear the intention of this CO₂ tax in a 2017 interview with the *Harvard Political Review*: "It is going to eventually put the carbon-producing companies out of business. If we can get a bill that causes that tax to go up by \$10 every year, it is going to be uneconomic to bring coal, gas, and oil out of the ground."⁶

Many Republican members of the Caucus might not fully appreciate that the Lobby's tax plan targets not only coal, which some mistakenly treat as synonymous with CO₂, but also the natural gas that has in recent decades become an important component of America's energy mix.

Climate Solutions Caucus co-founder Carlos Curbelo seemed to have no reservations about the impact of the Lobby's proposal when in July 2018 he introduced House Resolution 6463, ironically titled the "Market Choice Act." Curbelo's legislation would go even further than the Lobby's plan, by enacting a more-costly \$24-per-ton tax on CO₂, with the tax increasing 2 percent per year above the rate of inflation. Supposedly, the revenue would be used for infrastructure. As much as the Citizens' Climate Lobby CO₂ tax would raise energy prices, bankrupt energy industries, and kill jobs, the Curbelo tax would do all these

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things much more quickly.

3. The Lobby Espouses a Radical Left-Wing Ideology.

Republicans are mistaken who think the Citizens' Climate Lobby espouses reasonable policies to combat perceived climate change that are somehow consistent with free enterprise and individualist principles. The Lobby champions a left-wing, "social justice" agenda.

According to a 2016 article on the Lobby's website, "Climate change is a justice issue because it disproportionately affects the world's poor, those who have done the least to cause it." The website promises Citizens' Climate Lobby will not be another "white-dominated mainstream environmental group." In support of its social-justice rhetoric, the Lobby explains, "We have monthly calls where we

discuss [environmental justice] principles and share stories of the work that we're doing locally. There's also a smaller steering committee that meets more often ... to coordinate initiatives such as recognizing [environmental justice] values in CCL's principles."⁷

This is the group to which 43 House members of the GOP, the party that ostensibly stands for limited government and free-market policies, have chosen to associate.

4. The CO2 Tax Would Create a Tempting Slush Fund.

One argument made by some anti-fossil-fuel advocates is a CO2 tax could be revenue-neutral and thus less economically disruptive. However, this argument lacks credibility and is better understood as a disingenuous bait-and-switch appeal to secure Republican support.

According to the Carbon Tax Center, a group that supports the creation of a CO2 tax, CCL's CO2 tax would collect a staggering \$80 billion in new taxes—\$1,000 for a family of four—in just the first year.⁸ Each year the taxes would rise by an additional \$700 per family. Within a decade, government would collect approximately \$640 billion per year in CO2 taxes, with the average family of four paying \$8,000 more in taxes per year. That number would keep rising, too, by about \$700 per household per year.

ONCE REPUBLICANS LOCK THEMSELVES INTO BACKING A "REVENUE-NEUTRAL" CO2 TAX, DEMOCRATS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ALARMISTS WILL EMPLOY A CLASSIC BAIT-AND-SWITCH.

Republicans would be naïve to trust politicians to collect \$640 billion in new revenue, or whatever the amount might be, and then follow through on promises to return the money to the American people rather than use the money as a slush fund to grow government. The tax collection is certain, but the pledge to return the money is not.

5. The Promise of a Revenue-Neutral CO2 Tax Is a Bait-and-Switch Scam.

Most advocates of the CO2 tax insist that it must not be revenue-neutral, that the money collected should not be returned to taxpayers.

Some advocates may indicate some openness to the idea, as does the Citizens' Climate Lobby, but that's only done to seduce Republicans into supporting some type of CO2 tax. However, once Republicans lock themselves into backing a "revenue-neutral" CO2

tax, Democrats and environmental alarmists will employ a classic bait-and-switch.

One example of the CO2 tax bait-and-switch is unfolding in Washington State. Global warming alarmists put an allegedly revenue-neutral CO2 tax on the November 2016 ballot. After some high-profile Republicans expressed support for the measure, the Democratic Party and most environmental activist groups refused to support it.⁹ They claimed the revenue-neutral components of the tax were unacceptable and that its revenues should be kept by government

and directed to environmental and social-justice programs.

Cesia Kearns, deputy regional director for the Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal campaign, explained discussing the Sierra Club’s opposition to the revenue-neutral proposal that the group is “committed to striving toward these principles of equity and justice in how we shape these climate policies.”¹⁰ Without Democratic and environmental activist support, the ballot measure failed.

With many Republicans on the record praising CO₂ taxes and saying government should take affirmative steps to impose them, global warming activists have put another version of a CO₂ tax on the November 2018 ballot in Washington State.¹¹ This tax would not be revenue-neutral, and its revenues would fund leftist political priorities rather than be returned to energy consumers. Tax revenue recipients, for example, include the wind and solar power industries, government land-management programs, and Indian tribes. Republicans who supported the 2016 ballot initiative are now in a political dilemma, as they must either support the new version of the tax that creates a huge slush fund for left-wing political priorities or they must oppose a CO₂ tax after going on record saying there is a compelling need to enact one.

Another example of a CO₂ tax bait-and-switch scheme is related directly to Curbelo himself. In July 2018, a resolution was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives stating “a carbon tax would be detrimental to Ameri-

can families and businesses and is not in the best interest of the United States.” Only six Republicans voted against it, though seven Democrats voted for it. Shortly after that vote, Curbelo introduced his CO₂ tax bill, H.R. 6463, that would use the tax revenues to grow government, fund road construction and mass transportation, redistribute income, bolster government environmental research programs, and conveniently send block grants to coastal communities like those represented by Curbe-

lo. The legislation does *not* include a rebate for consumers.

Since most of the 43 GOP Caucus members voted for the resolution opposing any CO₂ tax-

es, they surely did not appreciate Curbelo’s proposed tax boxing them into a corner. After their vote supporting the anti-tax resolution—a vote that was consistent with the Caucus’s stated belief in “economically viable” measures—the media and environmental left criticized Republican Caucus members for their vote, claiming they were hypocrites and nothing more than empty suits. The following are just some of the harsh criticisms that followed the vote:

- “House Votes to Denounce Carbon Taxes. Where Was the Climate Solutions Caucus?”—*Inside Climate News*.
- “The group’s existence is lending Republican members of the caucus a level of legitimacy on climate issues that they don’t deserve given their anti-climate votes, according to critics.”—ThinkProgress.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF A
CO₂ TAX BAIT-AND-SWITCH
SCHEME IS RELATED DIRECTLY TO
CURBELO HIMSELF.

- Republicans on the Climate Solutions Caucus are “climate peacocks who squawk the squawk to join the Climate Solutions Caucus but won’t walk the walk.”—*Climate Hawks Vote*.

In the aftermath of the House resolution and the introduction of Curbelo’s CO₂ tax bill, Curbelo admitted “a carbon tax on its own would not be the best way forward and could have negative effects on the economy.”¹²

Voting in support of the anti-tax resolution and against the Curbelo bill may have been consistent with the stated goals of the Caucus, but Republican Caucus members were nevertheless lambasted for not going along with the bait-and-switch plan.

6. The Tax Would Put America on the Road to Command-and-Control.

Some in the GOP have supported a CO₂ tax as an alternative to a command-and-control, heavy-handed government regulatory approach to dealing with the perceived damage caused by fossil fuels. However, that is *not* what supporters of a CO₂ tax have in mind.

Prominent global warming activist David Roberts noted in *Vox* that CO₂ taxes “are good policy, an important part of the portfolio, but

unlikely ever to be sufficient on their own. It’s worth getting a price on carbon anywhere it can be gotten, but climate hawks should not believe, and definitely shouldn’t be saying in public, that a carbon price is *enough* ...” [emphasis in the original].¹³

BILL MCKIBBEN, ONE OF THE MOST VISIBLE AND INFLUENTIAL LEADERS IN THE GLOBAL WARMING MOVEMENT, BELIEVES THAT AFTER IMPLEMENTING A CO₂ TAX, GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONTINUALLY RATCHET UP THE TAX WHILE ALSO IMPOSING ADDITIONAL NEW RESTRICTIONS ON SUCH EMISSIONS.

Bill McKibben, one of the most visible and influential leaders in the global warming movement, believes that after implementing a CO₂ tax, government should continually ratchet up the tax while also imposing additional new restrictions on such emissions. “We need to do *everything*,” McKibben said. “Not just a price on carbon, but dramatic subsi-

dies for renewables to speed their spread. Not just a price on carbon, but an end to producing coal and gas and oil on public land. Not just a price on carbon, but a ban on fracking, which is sending clouds of methane into the atmosphere. Not just a price on carbon, but a dozen other major regulatory changes ... We are, you might say, in a war, and if that’s the case then think of a price on carbon as the infantry. It can get things done, but it’s going to need the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marines, as well.”¹⁴

McKibben also insists revenues collected via a CO₂ tax should be redistributed to “poor people, people of color, and Native nations, both in our country and around the world.” Social justice, according to McKibben, requires taxing Americans and giving the revenues to people in other countries.¹⁵

To the extent some CO2 tax revenue is spent on government programs in America, McKibben insists a disproportionate amount should be given to illegal aliens. “Any such rebates [from a CO2 tax] shouldn’t overlook the estimated nearly 12 million undocumented Americans who contribute to the economy—and cause far less than their proportional share of emissions,” McKibben said. “Environmental justice would mean a truly ‘fair’ system compensated them for that history.”¹⁶

7. The CO2 Tax Would Impose Substantial Economic Harm.

The burden imposed directly by a CO2 tax would not represent the lion’s share of money paid by consumers because of the imposition of that tax. The goal of the tax, whether revenue-neutral or not, is to drive up prices for natural gas, oil, and coal so high that utilities will not be able to afford them anymore, forcing them to use more-costly, less-reliable wind and solar power and pushing consumers to purchase automobiles with batteries powered by wind and solar. When this is the case, consumers will pay higher prices directly to electricity providers rather than in government taxes—thus, there is no direct government tax revenue collected or returned to consumers to compensate for their higher energy costs. Household energy bills would skyrocket, and household disposable income would fall. Even if the CO2 tax were crafted to be “revenue-neutral,” and it likely won’t be, it can never be de-

signed to be “pocketbook-neutral” or “household budget-neutral,” even if politicians could be trusted to return all the tax revenues to the American people.

THE BURDEN IMPOSED DIRECTLY BY A CO2 TAX WOULD NOT REPRESENT THE LION’S SHARE OF MONEY PAID BY CONSUMERS BECAUSE OF THE IMPOSITION OF THAT TAX.

Oil, coal, and natural gas are the foundation of U.S. and global energy use, because they are the most affordable and efficient energy sources. Driving these forms of energy out of the marketplace, either through high CO2 taxes or direct

government restrictions, would necessarily raise energy costs and inflict severe economic punishment, not only on U.S. households, but also on the entire economy. One cannot transform the U.S. economy from one utilizing low-cost energy sources to one shackled to unreliable, high-cost energy sources such as wind and solar and then credibly claim this will benefit the economy.

Making matters worse, a CO2 tax would severely handicap U.S. businesses competing against foreign companies and services. Manufacturers in China, India, Mexico, and many other countries already have a competitive advantage against American businesses in the form of extremely inexpensive labor. Imposing unilateral CO2 taxes on U.S. energy would strike an additional blow to American businesses.

Some CO2 tax proponents claim this disadvantage can be mitigated by imposing new tariffs on foreign goods that are commensurate with the emissions used to produce and transport those products. However, such a scheme

would violate one of the central tenets of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, which stated clearly rapidly industrializing nations such as China and India would not be restricted or pay any penalty for their CO2 emissions.

Any tariff scheme would require massive and costly new government bureaucracies and be incomprehensibly complicated. How much CO2 is expended for any given shirt, piece of furniture, or iPhone made in China? It's virtually impossible to accurately determine the amount of CO2 used, making it almost certain manufacturing-heavy nations will dispute any agreed-upon formulas for developing tariffs. Tariffs based on carbon-dioxide emissions would also likely ignite new trade wars, which would further harm the U.S. economy.

Claims that a new tariff regime would balance the punishment a CO2 tax would impose on U.S. businesses are little more than a tactical ploy that would never seriously be considered for real-world implementation.

8. Emissions Reductions Are Unnecessary and Futile.

A large body of scientific evidence indicates humans are not creating a global warming crisis.¹⁷ Thus, an economy-destroying CO2 tax and other restrictions desired by the Citizens' Climate Lobby and the Climate Solutions Caucus are entirely unnecessary. But even if it were determined humans are creating a serious

global warming problem, a CO2 tax levied by U.S. policymakers against American economic activity would have a negligible impact on global CO2 levels.

Global CO2 emissions are rising, with emissions currently 40 percent higher than they were at the turn of the century.¹⁸ However, im-

posing a unilateral CO2 tax on the United States would be punishing the wrong culprit. U.S. CO2 emissions have declined 14 percent since 2000—more than in any other nation in the world. Without cap-and-trade

restrictions, CO2 tax, or joining the United Nations' Kyoto Protocol or Paris Climate Agreement, U.S. energy production and energy use are leading the world in becoming more efficient and less CO2-intensive. Encouraging economic freedom rather than repressing it with government restrictions and taxes has proven to be the most effective way to reduce carbon-dioxide emissions.

It is debatable whether and how much foreign emissions would need to decline to have a significant impact on global temperature, but punishing the U.S. economy for its declining emissions trends would unquestionably have little or no impact on global CO2 emissions.

9. Republican Climate Solutions Caucus Members Are Not Committed Conservatives.

With such a damning case against CO2 taxes, one might wonder why 43 Republicans would

A CO2 TAX LEVIED BY U.S. POLICYMAKERS AGAINST AMERICAN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY WOULD HAVE A NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT ON GLOBAL CO2 LEVELS.

Climate Solutions Caucus Member	Heritage Action Score	Climate Solutions Caucus Member	Heritage Action Score
Mark Amodei (R-NV-02)	43%	Leonard Lance (R-NJ-07)	37%
Don Bacon (R-NE-02)	49%	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL-27)	30%
Jack Bergman (R-MI-01)	52%	Mia Love (R-UT-04)	78%
Mike Coffman (R-CO-06)	64%	Tom MacArthur (R-NJ-03)	33%
Chris Collins (R-NY-27)	43%	Brian Mast (R-FL-18)	44%
Barbara Comstock (R-VA-10)	49%	Erik Paulsen (R-MN-03)	44%
Ryan Costello (R-PA-06)	32%	Bill Posey (R-FL-08)	84%
Carlos Curbelo (R-FL-26)	28%	Amata Radewagen (R-AS-00)	NA
Rodney Davis (R-IL-13)	42%	Tom Reed (R-NY-23)	33%
Dan Donovan (R-NY-11)	36%	Dave Reichert (R-WA-08)	33%
John Faso (R-NY-19)	30%	Peter Roskam (R-IL-06)	51%
Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-08)	26%	Ed Royce (R-CA-39)	54%
Matt Gaetz (R-FL-01)	76%	Mark Sanford (R-SC-01)	92%
Mike Gallagher (R-WI-08)	84%	Elise Stefanik (R-NY-21)	25%
Jennifer Gonzalez-Colon (R-PR-00)	NA	Scott Taylor (R-VA-02)	51%
Brett Guthrie (R-KY-02)	67%	Claudia Tenney (R-NY-22)	47%
Randy Hultgren (R-IL-14)	60%	Dave Trott (R-MI-11)	45%
Darrell Issa (R-CA-49)	52%	Fred Upton (R-MI-06)	40%
Lynn Jenkins (R-KS-02)	59%	Mimi Walters (R-CA-45)	66%
David Joyce (R-OH-14)	41%	Kevin Yoder (R-KS-03)	61%
Peter King (R-NY-02)	38%	Lee Zeldin (R-NY-01)	66%
Steve Knight (R-CA-25)	45%	Average	49.5%

agree to be members of the Climate Solutions Caucus. Unsurprisingly, many Caucus members not only support the left-wing agenda of the Citizens' Climate Lobby, they also frequently advocate for other liberal political causes and usually vote against conservative proposals offered by their fellow Republicans.

The Heritage Action for America "Legislative Scorecard" measures the frequency with which members of Congress vote in favor of the conservative position on important issues.¹⁹ According to Heritage Action's analysis, 84 percent of Republicans who are not members of the Climate Solutions Caucus vote in agreement with Heritage Action for America in at least half of all votes. However, as the list below shows, only 42 percent of Republican Climate Solutions Caucus members vote in agreement with the conservative positions advanced by Heritage Action at least half the time. By comparison, even the late Republican "maverick" Sen. John McCain (AZ) voted in agreement with Heritage Action's positions in 66 percent of all relevant votes.

Simply put, a good indication of whether a Republican member of Congress generally votes in opposition to the Republican voters he or she claims to represent is whether the member belongs to the Climate Solutions Caucus.

As the table on page 10 shows, 17 of 41 Republican Climate Solutions Caucus members vote with the conservative position at least

50 percent of the time. Twenty-four out of 41 Republican Climate Solutions Caucus members vote against the conservative position in at least 50 percent of votes. Forty-one percent of Republican Climate Solutions Caucus members score above 50 percent (17 out of 41 members). Eighty-two percent of Republican members who do not belong to the Climate Solutions Caucus score above 50 percent (159 out of 195 members).

10. Caucus Membership Has Been Proven to Have Serious Election Day Consequences.

Given the information presented throughout this *Policy Brief*, common sense should be enough to dissuade Republican members of Congress from joining the Climate Solutions Caucus and supporting the Citizens' Climate Lobby agenda. However, if that is not sufficient, Republicans should consider the dangerous political consequences they are likely to suffer should they join the Caucus.

To begin with, U.S. voters, including Republicans, assign little importance to addressing global warming. In a January 2018 poll conducted by the Pew Research Center, global warming ranked as Americans' second-to-last concern among 19 priority options.²⁰ Similarly, a July 2018 Gallup poll of more than 1,000 Americans revealed not a single respondent listed global warming as his or her most im-

THE HERITAGE ACTION FOR AMERICA "LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD" MEASURES THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE CONSERVATIVE POSITION ON IMPORTANT ISSUES.

portant priority. A March 2018 Gallup poll found only one-third of Republican voters worry about global warming or believe humans are causing global warming.²¹

The above polling data indicate Republican policymakers will win over few, if any, new supporters by becoming members of the Climate Solutions Caucus or virtue-signaling about global warming. It is likely, however, Republican policymakers will alienate their existing Republican voter base by supporting a CO2 tax or other items promoted by global warming activists.

Beyond merely disagreeing with elected policymakers who advocate for greater government action to fight global warming, Republican voters have shown a willingness to punish GOP policymakers who reject conservative principles by supporting left-wing policies related to global warming. For example, although it is rare for congressional incumbents to lose a party primary, voters punished incumbent South Carolina Republican congressman Bob Inglis with a 71–29 percent defeat in his 2010 Republican primary after Inglis started to advocate for climate action. According to a headline in *The New York Times* reporting on Inglis’ primary defeat, “Republicans Learn the Perils of Being Politically Incorrect on Climate Change.”²²

Similarly, Republican primary voters in 2018 voted out incumbent Climate Solutions Caucus member Mark Sanford as well, despite the fact Sanford had received relatively high scores from the conservative Heritage Action for America on other issues.²³

In Florida in 2018, longtime presumptive Republican gubernatorial nominee Adam Putnam lost his primary race after taking liberal positions on global warming and energy policy.²⁴

Membership in the Climate Solutions Caucus is, in terms of politics, a death-defying act. Seven vulnerable Republican Caucus members decided not to run for reelection in 2018 rather than suffer a likely defeat at the polls. Another 14 are in tight political races.

Caucus membership does nothing to win support from the media, Democrats, or independent voters, who, as polling consistently shows, do not prioritize global warming when making decisions about who to vote for. As the far-left website *ThinkProgress* noted earlier in 2018, “After the midterm elections, it’s possible that 22 of the 43 Republican members of the caucus will no longer be serving in Congress.”²⁵

THE ABOVE POLLING DATA INDICATE REPUBLICAN POLICYMAKERS WILL WIN OVER FEW, IF ANY, NEW SUPPORTERS BY BECOMING MEMBERS OF THE CLIMATE SOLUTIONS CAUCUS OR VIRTUE-SIGNALING ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING.

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Notes

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¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ See S. Fred Singer, Craig D. Idso, and Robert M. Carter, eds., *Climate Change Reconsidered* series, Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change, <http://climatechangereconsidered.org>.

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