

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

May 6, 2016

Dr. Margaret Leinen
President and Chair of the Board
American Geophysical Union
2000 Florida Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Dr. Leinen,

We have tremendous respect for the American Geophysical Union (AGU) and are grateful for all the support AGU has provided both to scientists and to policymakers, such as us. That support has enabled major scientific advances throughout the scientific endeavor.

We have been following the process by which AGU evaluated whether to continue accepting money from ExxonMobil (EM), and are disappointed by the board's decision to continue doing so. We are particularly concerned you didn't consider two important things: (1) publicly available EM documents and (2) a key component of AGU's organizational support policy (OSP). We urge you to reconsider the decision.

First, the documents. In Dr. Leinen's letter to AGU members explaining the board's decision, she said you evaluated whether EM's current actions are inconsistent with AGU's policy against accepting support from entities that promote science misinformation, either directly or indirectly by funding other organizations. She went on to say the Board "concluded that it is not possible for [AGU board members] to determine unequivocally whether EM is participating in misinformation about science currently, either directly or indirectly."

EM gave money as recently as 2014 to several organizations that cast doubt on climate change, so we are surprised at AGU's conclusion. According to EM's most recent Worldwide Giving and Community Investments report, in 2014, EM funded several organizations that publicly promote misinformation of science, including:

- **American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) (\$61,500):** ALEC has promoted model legislation with a finding that human-induced global warming "may lead to deleterious, neutral, or possibly beneficial climatic changes."¹
- **Hoover Institution (\$50,000 to its Arctic Security Initiative):** Hoover Senior Fellow Terry Anderson, who is not a climate scientist, argued that climate data since 1880

¹ "Interstate Research Commission on Climatic Change Act." *Model Policy*. ALEC, 28 Jan. 2013. Web. 27 Apr. 2016.

supports a conclusion that it would take as long as 500 years to reach 4 °C of global warming.²

- **Manhattan Institute of Policy Research (\$100,000 to its Center for Energy Policy):** Institute Senior Fellow Robert Bryce stated, “The science is not settled, not by a long shot... If serious scientists [at the European Organization for Nuclear Research] can question Einstein’s theory of relativity, then there must be room for debate about the workings and complexities of the Earth’s atmosphere. Furthermore, even if we accept that carbon dioxide is bad, it’s not clear exactly what we should do about it.”³
- **National Black Chamber of Commerce (\$75,000):** Chamber President and CEO Harry Alford stated, “[NOAA and NASA] have reported that there has been no global warming detected for the last 18 years. That is over 216 months in a row that there has been no detected global warming... Scientists, as well as NOAA and NASA, call this state of no warming a ‘Global Pause.’ How long it will last no one predicts. For all we know it may last another 20 years or even forever.”⁴
- **Pacific Legal Foundation (\$10,000):** A senior attorney at Pacific Legal Foundation attacked EPA’s authority to regulate CO2 because it is a “ubiquitous natural substance essential to life on Earth.”⁵

We have seen no evidence to indicate EM’s behavior has changed since 2014.

EM always trumpets its work related to the development of climate science, but never comments on its decades-long history of providing financial support to organizations that publicly promote misinformation of science. That EM conducts legitimate research is not a defense for EM’s continued support for these organizations. EM can’t have it both ways.

Second, AGU’s policy. A component of AGU’s OSP – “the public statement(s) of our organizational partners shall not directly oppose those of AGU” – seems to have been absent from the Board’s decision-making process. Since 2003, AGU has been on record stating not just that human-induced climate change is real, but that we can adopt policies to avoid some of the worst outcomes we face. AGU’s “Human-Induced Climate Change Requires Urgent Action” states:

Humanity is the major influence on the global climate change observed over the past 50 years. Rapid societal responses can significantly lessen negative outcomes... While important scientific uncertainties remain as to which particular impacts will be experienced where, no uncertainties are known that could make the impacts of climate change inconsequential.

² Anderson, Terry. “Climate Change and Human Ingenuity.” *Publications*. Hoover Institution, 10 Sep. 2015. Web. 27 Apr. 2016.

³ Bryce, Robert. “Five Truths About Climate Change.” *Commentary*. *Wall Street Journal*, 6 Oct. 2011. Web. 27 Apr. 2016.

⁴ Alford, Harry. “Global Warming Proponents Cling to Costly Farce.” *Commentary*. *Philadelphia Tribune*, 4 Nov. 2015. Web. 27 Apr. 2016.

⁵ Henneke, Robert. “Texas Public Policy Foundation & Pacific Legal Foundation File Amicus Brief on Clean Power Plan.” *Press Resources*. Texas Public Policy Foundation, 23 Feb. 2016. Web. 27 Apr. 2016.

This public position cannot be reconciled with the positions taken by the groups EM funds and the trade associations that represent it. EM's position on pricing carbon makes this point. In a recent *ClimateWire* interview with Dr. Leinen about the Board's decision to continue accepting money from EM, she cited "[EM's] support [of] a carbon tax as their particular favorite mechanism for dealing with the consensus to decrease carbon dioxide" as evidence that EM's position on climate change has evolved.

We can attest that Exxon's purported support for a carbon tax is not real. It is impossible to reconcile EM's stated support for a revenue-neutral carbon tax with the lobbying activities of EM and the trade associations that claim to represent EM on the Hill. What we see in Congress is that their lobbying efforts are 100 percent opposed to any action on climate. According to a recent report from the nonprofit research organization InfluenceMap, EM spent \$27 million on obstructive climate lobbying in 2015. It also shows the American Petroleum Institute (API) and the Western States Petroleum Association – two industry trade groups to which EM belongs – spent a combined \$71 million on obstructive climate lobbying in 2015. This money deluge includes advertising and public relations, direct lobbying here in Congress and in state capitals, and political contributions and electioneering.

Additionally, in 2014, EM gave the U.S. Chamber of Commerce \$1 million, yet the Chamber's climate message, delivered loud and clear not only here in Congress but in the courts, is one of absolute intransigence against any serious climate action. Along with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, other trade associations to which EM belongs (e.g., American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers and the American Chemistry Council (ACC)), and organizations EM funds (e.g., Pacific Legal Foundation) are challenging the Administration's Clean Power Plan in court. And, the U.S. Chamber, ACC, and Natural Gas Supply Association are publicly trying to kill the methane standards from new oil and gas sources the Administration is finalizing.

Enclosed is a recent article in the Harvard Business Review in which Senator Whitehouse describes our reality. API, the Chamber of Commerce, and other EM trade associations are dead set against Congress doing anything serious about climate change. Their power in Congress is fully dedicated to stopping any serious climate legislation, and we see their hostility everywhere.

It is sadly not unheard of in legislative matters for an interest group to take a public position, but then flex its mighty lobbying and political muscle against that very position. As Members of Congress we wanted to warn you not to take the EM "position" on a carbon price at face value. It is false.

Last December, Representatives Lieu, Welch, and 43 other Representatives sent a letter to EM asking whether EM is "continuing to fund misinformation regarding climate science either directly or through third parties." As you can see from the enclosed EM response, EM never denies that it continues to promote misinformation or funds organizations that do. Instead of answering straightforward questions, EM promotes its reputable climate research, alleges the outlets that have reported on EM's misdeeds are the ones misleading the public, credits natural gas as the main reason carbon dioxide emissions have dropped, and expresses its "support" for a carbon fee.

You have been fooled. Whatever position AGU chooses to take, you should not take it based on self-serving representations by ExxonMobil.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Ted Lieu
Member of Congress

Enclosures:

- January 27, 2016 ExxonMobil Letter to Representatives Lieu and Welch
- February 25, 2016 *Harvard Business Review* article "The Climate Movement Needs More Corporate Lobbyists" by Senator Whitehouse

Cc:

John Bates, AGU Director
Catherine Constable, AGU Director
Carlos Dengo, AGU Development Board Chair
Carol Finn, AGU Past President
Seth Kahan, AGU Director
Christine W. McEntee, AGU Executive Director/CEO
Soroosh Sorooshian, AGU Director
Robin Elizabeth Bell, AGU Council Vice-Chair, Section President
Eric A. Davidson, AGU Council Chair, President-elect
Rana A. Fine, AGU Director
Joshua M. Greenberg, AGU Director
Kelly Klima, AGU Director
Cathryn A. Manduca, AGU Director
Louise Pellerin, AGU General Secretary
Susan Webb, AGU International Secretary

January 27, 2016

The Honorable Ted Lieu
United States House of Representatives
415 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Peter Welch
United States House of Representatives
2303 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Lieu and Representative Welch:

ExxonMobil received your letter dated December 7, 2015, inquiring about its activities related to climate change. The company shares your interest in the effects of energy use on the environment, and welcomes the chance to engage in productive dialogue with elected officials on this important subject, and other matters related to energy.

However, the reports cited in your letter are grossly misleading. They deliberately distort ExxonMobil's history of climate change research, which the company has actively and publicly pursued since the 1970s, as well as the reasons for its criticism of the Kyoto Protocol in the 1990s — criticisms shared by a resounding number of your colleagues in the United States Senate, which rejected the Kyoto Protocol by a vote of 95-0. ExxonMobil believes these reports are part of a coordinated public relations campaign, orchestrated by groups opposed to the use of oil and natural gas.

That said, please note that ExxonMobil already has addressed many of the issues raised in your letter in a variety of public materials, including our *Corporate Citizenship Report* and other reports to shareholders; corporate website (www.exxonmobil.com) and corporate blog, www.exxonmobilperspectives.com.

ExxonMobil is proud of its research on climate change, carbon life-cycle analysis and emissions reductions. Our work has resulted in nearly 150 publicly available papers, including more than 50 peer-reviewed publications. ExxonMobil has collaborated with top scientists and participated in the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change since its inception in 1988 – a collaboration that continues to this day.

The company also is proud of its role in America's emissions-reduction. Along with our subsidiary, XTO Energy, ExxonMobil has been instrumental in the "shale revolution" that has enabled U.S. gas production to rise by close to 45 percent since 2005. As EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy noted, greater use of cleaning-burning natural gas has been "enormously

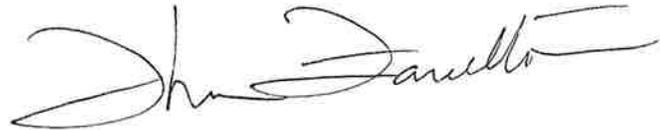
beneficial" for air quality; and the shift from coal to gas has been a main reason U.S. CO₂ emissions have declined to levels not seen since the 1990s.

ExxonMobil also is actively researching solutions that could play a major role in emissions-reduction in the decades to come, such as carbon capture and sequestration, and biofuels made from advanced sources like algae. In the last decade, the company has spent billions of dollars to research and develop new energy technologies, as well as find ways to reduce our emissions and environmental footprint.

ExxonMobil supports efforts by nations to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions; including further energy efficiency gains. When governments are considering policy options, ExxonMobil believes a revenue-neutral carbon tax is the most efficient and effective way to "price" carbon to consumers and investors.

We appreciate this opportunity to clarify misperceptions about ExxonMobil's work on climate change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Danallo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping tail.

The Climate Movement Needs More Corporate Lobbyists

By: Sheldon Whitehouse

February 25, 2016

Across corporate America, there is broad support for action on climate change. Leading businesses and executives vocally supported President Obama on the Paris Agreement. Many companies have committed themselves to getting onto a sustainable path, and many are pushing their commitment out through their supply chains. This is good, and it's important.

But it makes us in Congress feel a little left out. The corporate lobbying presence in Congress is immense. But in my experience, exactly zero of it is dedicated to lobbying for a good, bipartisan climate bill.

Dante wrote that above the Inferno was a sign: "Abandon hope all ye who enter here." But there is hope in Congress. Many of my Republican colleagues are eager for some political support, to counter the fossil fuel industry's relentless onslaught.

Despite the statements emitted from oil companies' executive suites about taking climate change seriously and supporting a price on carbon, their lobbying presence in Congress is 100% opposed to any action. In particular, the American Petroleum Institute, the oil industry trade association, is an implacable foe. Given the industry's massive conflict of interest, there is every reason to believe they are playing a double game: trying to buy a little credibility with these public comments while using all their quiet lobbying muscle to crush any threat of bipartisan action on the carbon pricing they claim to espouse.

I am a sponsor of a Senate carbon fee bill, so I know this firsthand. I see their destructive handiwork all around me — and they have no corporate opposition.

Let me use the example of two good guys: Coca-Cola and PepsiCo. I believe they care about climate change. They have no conflict of interest like fossil fuel companies do. Both signed a public letter urging strong action on climate in Paris. Pepsi signed two major business climate action pledges, the Ceres BICEP Climate Declaration in the United States and the Prince of Wales's Corporate Leaders Group Trillion Tonne Communiqué in the UK.

Coca-Cola's website says it will reduce CO₂ emissions by 25% by "making comprehensive carbon footprint reductions across its manufacturing processes, packaging formats, delivery fleet, refrigeration equipment, and ingredient sourcing." Coca-Cola says, "We...encourag[e] progress in response to climate change." Indra Nooyi, chair and CEO of PepsiCo says: "Combating climate change is absolutely critical to the future of our company, customers, consumers — and our world. I believe all of us need to take action now."

And they are taking action. Their effort puts Coke and Pepsi at the forefront of corporate climate responsibility. But they lobby Congress through a trade association, the American Beverage Association, and through the business lobbying group, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The

American Beverage Association sits on the board of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and contributes a lot of money to it.

The American Beverage Association, as far as I can tell, has never lobbied on climate change. When the Association thought Congress might impose a soda tax to fund health care, they lobbied like crazy — nearly \$30 million dollars' worth. They know how to lobby, when they want to. But on climate, I've never seen it.

Everyone in Congress knows that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is dead set against Congress doing anything serious about climate change. The U.S. Chamber is very powerful, and its power in Congress is fully dedicated to stopping any serious climate legislation. We see their hostility everywhere.

The result is that Coke and Pepsi take great positions on climate change in their public materials and private actions, but here in Congress their lobbying agencies don't support their position.

No corporate lobbying force is exerted for good on climate change. Mars, maker of the iconic M&M, is going fully carbon neutral. Its climate performance is spectacular. No lobbying. WalMart, America's biggest retailer, is spending tens of millions of dollars to become sustainable. No lobbying. Apple and Google and Facebook are forward-looking, cutting-edge companies of the future, and they lead in sustainability. No lobbying.

The reasoning I am given is always the same. People fear retribution, so embedded is the fossil fuel industry in Congress. The result is the good guys abandoning the field to the worst climate actors in America: the fossil fuel industry and its array of front groups. They don't just lobby. The roughest of these, Americans for Prosperity, boasts loudly that it will spend \$750 million in this election (it's already through \$400 million and climbing) and that any effort to address climate change will put candidates in "political peril," that they'll be "at a severe disadvantage." Subtle like a brick.

My response is twofold.

Climate change is not just any other issue. It's so big an issue that the world's leaders just gathered in Paris to address it. It's so big an issue that it has its own page on most corporate websites. It's so big an issue that our former Pacific commander, Admiral Samuel J. Locklear, said it was the biggest national security threat we face in the Pacific Theater. To use his words, climate change "is probably the most likely thing that is going to happen...that will cripple the security environment, probably more likely than the other scenarios we all often talk about." So it's big enough for corporations to treat it as more than just another issue in Congress.

Second, they can't hurt you if you organize. An antelope alone may fall to the hyenas, but the herd will protect itself. The fossil fuel industry can't punish Coke and Pepsi and WalMart and Apple and Google and Mars and all the other 100-plus companies who rallied publicly around a strong Paris agreement. You have to stand together.

Around Congress, the bullying menace of the fossil fuel industry is a constant. If the good guys cede the field to them, the result is predictable: members of Congress frozen in place, often against their better judgment. It doesn't have to be this way. I'm in Congress, and I'm writing here to say: we need you guys to show up.