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Pro-Freedom Policy for CO₂ Emissions

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America is taking a “punish America” approach to reducing CO₂, making our energy more expensive and less reliable while China, Russia, and others increase their emissions.

The only moral and practical way to reduce CO₂ emissions is innovation that makes low-carbon energy globally cost-competitive. So long as fossil fuels are the most cost-competitive option for people, especially in developing nations, they will (rightly) choose to emit CO₂.

The US causes < 1/6 of global CO₂ emissions - and falling. The main reason global CO₂ emissions are rising is because billions of people in the developing world are bringing themselves out of poverty by using fossil fuels to power factories, farms, and vehicles.

The developing world overwhelmingly uses fossil fuels because that is by far the lowest-cost way for them to get reliable energy. Unreliable solar and wind can't come close. That's why China and India have hundreds of new coal plants in development.

The only way to lower CO₂ emissions and benefit America is to promote innovation that makes low-carbon energy truly reliable and low-cost. Are China and India going to stop using fossil fuels so long as they are the lowest-cost option? They won't and they shouldn't.

Fortunately, there are low-carbon energy technologies with great promise. For example, nuclear energy provided low-cost, reliable electricity in the 1960s and 1970s, and has shown great promise for the future for providing industrial process heat as well as power for heavy-duty transportation.

What promising low-carbon energy technologies need above all to become cost-competitive is freedom to innovate. Entrepreneurs need to be free to rapidly test, implement, and evolve their ideas.

Instead of low-carbon energy evolving to become more cost-effective than fossil fuels, we are seeing huge government preferences for solar and wind “solutions” that make electricity more expensive and less reliable.

Our ineffective and self-destructive approach to low-carbon energy has 2 main causes:

1. Unquestioning obedience to the anti-development “green energy” movement.
2. The false view that rising CO₂ levels are a “climate emergency” requiring desperate, crash measures.

Low-carbon energy policy has been dominated by the “green energy” movement. This movement is hostile to all development because of development’s impact on nature, and therefore is hostile to every form of cost-effective energy.

The anti-development “green energy” movement’s enthusiastic support for solar & wind is phony. Just as it opposes fossil fuels, nuclear, and hydro for their impact, it also opposes the massive mining, construction, and transmission-line-building “green energy” requires.

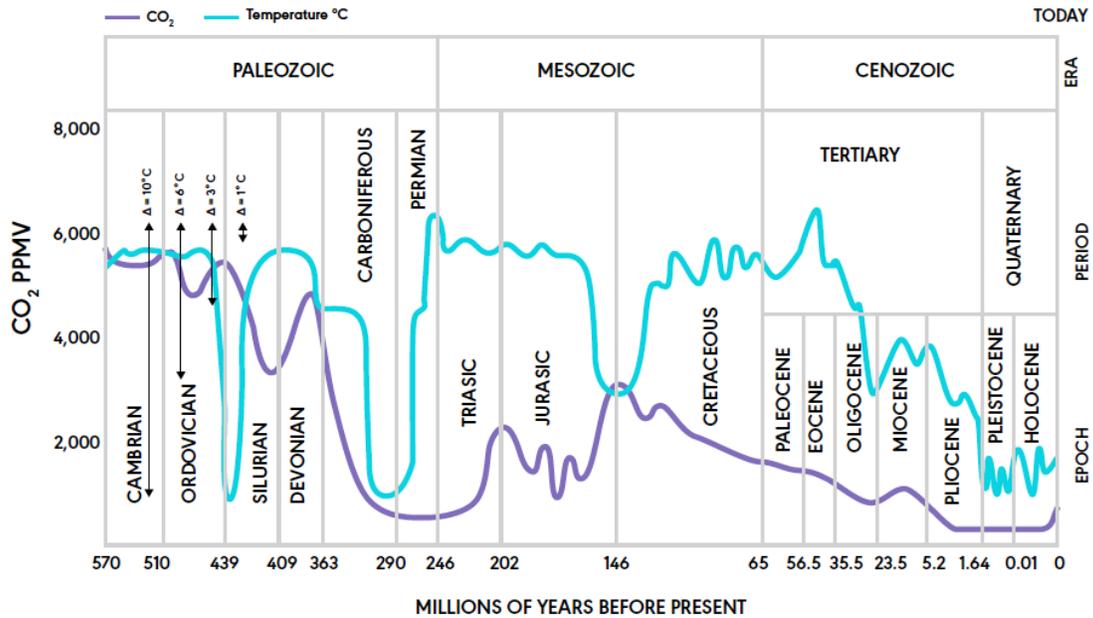
Low-carbon energy policy has also failed because it has been dominated by the false idea that the climate impact of rising CO₂ levels from fossil fuel use constitutes a “climate emergency” requiring desperate programs that inevitably punish America.

The latest example of the desperate approach to CO₂ reduction was the *Inflation Reduction Act*, which was rushed through Congress without any real discussion—and which in practice will enrich the green lobby while devastating our grid.

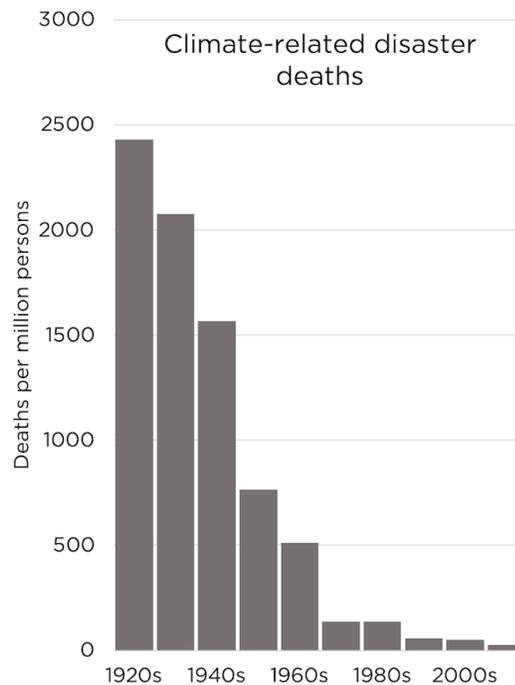
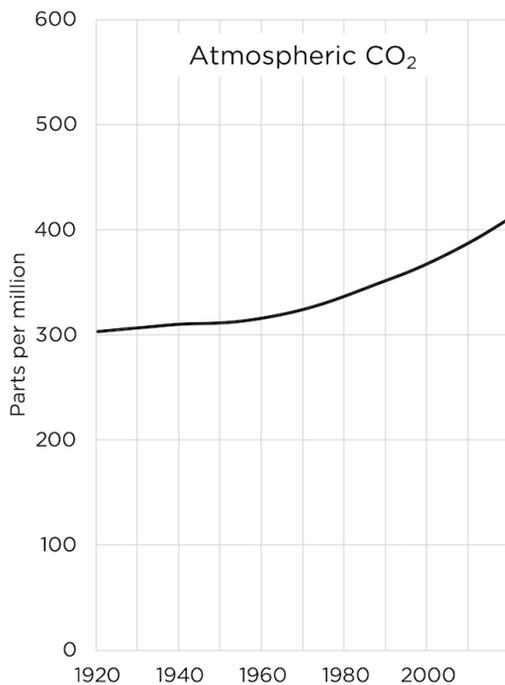
While “climate change” is real, “climate emergency” is not. The world is slowly becoming warmer - at a cold point in geological history, when many more people die of cold than of heat. This does not justify rapidly restricting global fossil fuel use.

The truth is that fossil fuels' CO₂ emissions have contributed to the warming of the last 170 years, but that warming has been mild - 1° C, mostly in the colder parts of the world. And life on Earth thrived (and was far greener) when CO₂ levels were at least 5X higher than today's.

Geological Timescale: Concentration of CO₂ and Temperature Fluctuations



Fossil fuels actually make us far safer from climate by providing low-cost energy for the amazing machines that protect us against storms, protect us against extreme temperatures, and alleviate drought. Climate disaster deaths have decreased 98% over the last century.



So long as America follows the anti-development “green energy” movement and the “climate emergency” narrative, it will continue to adopt senseless policies that punish America while doing nothing to bring about globally cost-competitive low-carbon energy.

The only moral and practical way to reduce emissions long-term is liberating innovation that makes low-carbon energy globally cost-competitive—while ending all policies that punish America via rapid short-term emissions reduction. Some key policies:

- **Reject the false idea of “climate emergency.”**

Our government’s disastrous anti-fossil fuel policies are justified by the disastrous conflation of “climate impact,” which is real, with “climate emergency,” which is not, given today's unprecedented safety from climate danger.

- **Withdraw from the Paris Agreement and encourage others to do the same.**

The Paris Agreement is an immoral agreement that calls for rapidly eliminating fossil fuels, which are the only near-term way to provide reliable energy for billions of people at prices they can afford.

- **Reject and eliminate all carbon taxes.**

Carbon taxes increase our energy costs based on the false premise that the “negative externalities” of fossil fuels’ CO₂ emissions outweigh the “positive externalities” of the uniquely low-cost, reliable energy they provide for billions.

- **Amend the Clean Air Act to explicitly reject the bogus “endangerment finding.”**

Much of today’s “punish America” CO₂ policy is rooted in EPA's “endangerment finding,” which treats fossil fuel use as a net harm to “public health and welfare” even though it radically improves both.

- **Decriminalize nuclear energy.**

The overregulation of low-carbon nuclear verges on criminalization, making nuclear costs 10X higher than they need to be. Decriminalizing nuclear, including radical reform of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Environmental Protection Agency, will make energy far cheaper, safer, and cleaner.

- **End all preferences for unreliable electricity.**

Today's electric grids are being ruined by systemic preferences for unreliable electricity, which causes prices to rise and reliability to decline. Eliminating them can help make America a leader in low-cost, reliable electricity.