

Ohio Section of American Institute of Professional Geologists



Position Statement Markey-Waxman “Cap & Trade” House Bill H.R. 2454

The Ohio Section of the American Institute of Professional Geologists does hereby oppose House Bill H.R. 2454, the Markey-Waxman “cap & trade” bill. The bill is based on the premise that human production of CO₂ gas is responsible for “global warming” and that *“global warming poses a significant threat to the national security, economy, public health and welfare, and environment of the United States and other countries”* (H.R. 2454, Title VII, Part A, Section 701). The Ohio Section of AIPG professes that there is no scientific evidence supporting this premise. We therefore reject the bill’s aforementioned, unsupported premise. Subsequently, we also reject the bill’s alarmist claims and unprecedented, economy-wide, government-control proposals.

As geologists, we affirm that any evaluation of climatic change should be viewed through the context of geologic time and processes. We recognize that world climate has and will change. We concur with the U.S. Geological Survey position that, “the earth’s surface does not exist in a static, unchanging ‘natural’ condition interrupted only by the work of humans, but instead is a dynamic system of which humans are a part.”¹ Indeed, the earth’s 4.5 billion year history contains evidence of thousands of climatic variations pre-dating the dawn of humanity to present time. Rock records contain evidence of numerous transgressions (advances), and regressions (retreats) of sea-level. The greater part of Ohio and the northern latitudes were buried by four major continental glacial ice advances within the past one million years, with the most recent ice-retreat occurring approximately 10,000 years ago.² More recently, temperatures were warmer than present during the Medieval Warm Period (550 A.D. to 1150 A.D.), and cooler than present during the Little Ice Age (1500 A.D. to late 1800s A.D.).³ Past geologic history and physical evidence from the most recent ice-ages indicate that the northern latitudes are now experiencing a warming cycle. Therefore, observed ice-melting is to be expected. Dominant natural causes for climate change are several and include but are not limited to: solar variation in multi-spectral radiation; solar wind cycles; magnetic-pole reversals; wind circulation cycles; oceanic current cycles; greenhouse-gas fluctuations associated with volcanism and other natural causes; oceanic-atmospheric gas exchange cycles; plate tectonics; astronomical cycles; earth rotational cycles; and other natural influences discovered and undiscovered.

We are concerned that the bill relies primarily on reports by the United Nation’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UN IPCC), to support its premise. Our concerns include IPCC reliance on unrepresentative ground-based temperature stations.⁴ We note an inability of ground-based data to agree with superior quality temperature values from weather-balloons and satellites.⁵ Of additional concern is the 2001 IPCC Third Assessment Report’s reliance on the work of Mann et al. (1998)⁶ in claiming 1998 the “warmest year, in at least a millennium.” The report’s claim, along with its prominently featured “hockey-stick” temperature graph, has since been discredited by the National Academy of Science (2006).⁷ We also have concern with IPCC dependence on unreliable climate computer-model simulations. A high degree of model uncertainty was made clear during a recent failure to predict a current cooling trend revealed by NASA satellite data (2008).⁸ Dr. Roy Spencer, former Senior Scientist for Climate Studies at NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center, contends that an incomplete understanding of clouds, and water vapor in its role as the dominant green-house gas, are prime sources of model error.⁹ The bill’s authors are apparently aware of model limitations, since the bill contains no temperature reduction goals, contrary to its stated climate control objectives.

Given the lack of evidence supporting the bill's premise, we reject the claims of near-term increases in human-caused severe weather, fire, coastal flooding, drought, disease, mass animal extinctions, and displaced human populations (H.R. 2454, Title VII, Part A, Section 701). As geologists, we advocate careful conservation of the earth's resources, sound stewardship, and protection of the environment. The United States has become a leader in developing effective strategies to achieve these objectives. However, these objectives are not paralleled in emerging markets. We therefore oppose the bill because it will increase global pollution, by shifting American manufacturing to emerging countries such as China, India, and others. We also recognize grave economic consequences from the bill, which extend beyond the scope of this geologic-advisory position paper.

There is compelling evidence to support the position that human CO₂ emissions do not cause climate-change. Existing data reveal that human change-agents are so small in the total climate force-field that they are negligible. We therefore advocate thoughtful evaluation based on the scientific method and oppose any hasty and drastic action. We, the Ohio Section of the American Institute of Professional Geologists, find we are in the company of some 30,000 scientists world-wide who objectively subscribe to this same position.¹⁰

Approved by:

The executive committee on this date, August 27, 2009, in compliance with the membership majority vote of the Ohio Section of the American Institute of Professional Geologists.

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Note: Numerous support and academic citations are accessible through the above stated references.