

Congressional Western Caucus

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S., Chairman

Forum Memorandum

February 26, 2019

To: Western Caucus Members, Forum Participants and Members of the Press

From: Western Caucus Staff--

Forum: Western Caucus Policy Forum
Green New Deal Bill introduced by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14)
Wednesday, February 27, 2018, 2:00-3:30 PM, 1300 Longworth HOB

Green New Deal Bill introduced by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14)

Goals of the Policy Forum

This important Policy Forum and first in-depth public review of the Green New Deal (GND) by Congress will closely examine this proposal in order to gain a better understanding of its details and likely impacts.

Witnesses and participants will discuss how a transition of this magnitude might occur, analyze how the proposal will be paid for and the estimated costs, and review the overall feasibility of and opportunities associated with the Green New Deal. The Green New Deal's impacts on jobs, society, the environment, the economy, as well as on our agriculture, energy and transportation sectors will also be considered.

All members of the Western Caucus, Rep. Ocasio-Cortez and all cosponsors of H.Res.109, as well as outside organizations on both sides of this issue have been invited to participate in this forum (Witness list below).

Summary of the Bill

H.Res.109, authored by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14), is a resolution that outlines the scope and scale of the Green New Deal and was introduced on February 13, 2019.

H.Res.109 calls for the creation of a Green New Deal with the goals of:

- achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions;
- establishing millions of high-wage jobs and ensuring economic security for all;
- investing in infrastructure and industry;
- securing clean air and water, climate and community resiliency, healthy food, access to nature, and a sustainable environment for all; and
- promoting justice and equality.

The resolution calls for accomplishment of these goals through a 10-year national, social, industrial and economic mobilization effort at a scale not seen since World War II and the New Deal era:

- meeting 100 percent of the power demand in the United States through clean, renewable, and zero-emission energy sources;
- upgrading all existing buildings and constructing new buildings to achieve maximum energy and water efficiency;
- removing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation and agricultural sectors;

- creating high-quality union jobs that pay prevailing wages, hiring local workers, offering training and advancement opportunities, and guaranteeing wage and benefit parity for workers affected by the transition;
- guaranteeing a job with a family-sustaining wage, adequate family and medical leave, paid vacations, and retirement security to all people of the United States; and
- providing higher education, high-quality health care, and affordable, safe, and adequate housing to all.

Summary Documents Related to the Bill

Click [here](#) to read the text of H.Res.109. Click [here](#) to watch the kickoff press conference. Click [here](#) to read a dear colleague circulated by Rep. Ocasio-Cortez.

Click [here](#) to read the second version of the Green New Deal FAQs Rep. Ocasio-Cortez's office provided to NPR. Click [here](#) to read Green New Deal FAQ's posted on Rep. Ocasio-Cortez's website that has since been deleted.

In September of 2018, the think tank Data for Progress published a 39-page report [here](#) that provides the clearest picture to date on how Green New Deal policy objectives will be accomplished and what they actually contain. In this policy report, Data for Progress claims the Green New Deal will:

- Ban hydraulic fracking.
- Enforce the Obama Clean Power Plan to regulate carbon dioxide emissions from power plants.
- Reinstate and implement the Obama-era WOTUS Rule.
- Phase out oil exports and leases on public lands.
- Ban unsustainable groundwater mining by large-scale agribusiness.
- Allow zero waste by 2040.
- Expand Sustainable Farming and Soil Practices to 30% of Ag land by 2030 and 70% by 2050.
- Establish bans on single use plastics and non-recyclable goods and packaging.
- Reforest 40 million acres of public and private land by 2035.
- Protect two million new miles of waterways.
- Draw new voters.
- Ensure large investments for safe pedestrian and bicycle travel, low-carbon bus rapid transit and electrified light rail.
- Ratchet up appliance, lighting, and equipment efficiency standards and establish tariffs on low-efficiency imports.
- Provide livable wage requirements that include health insurance, full-time hours, and minimum length of employment.
- Require special consideration and recruitment requirements of workers from low-income, minority, under-employed communities, as well as those displaced by the energy transition.¹

Following a disastrous rollout and criticism of the deleted FAQ's page one of Rep. Ocasio-Cortez's staffers tweeted, "An early draft of a FAQ that was clearly unfinished and that doesn't represent the GND [Green New Deal] resolution got published to the website by mistake. But what's in the resolution is the GND."² Proponents and Rep. Ocasio-Cortez's staff are also promising that more policy details are forthcoming.³

¹ <https://www.dataforprogress.org/green-new-deal>

² <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/ocasio-cortez-adviser-admits-he-falsely-claimed-green-new-deal-didnt-promise-security-for-those-unwilling-to-work>

³ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/congress/the-mysterious-case-of-aocs-scrubbed-green-new-deal-details>

By attempting to distance themselves from their own FAQ pages, Rep. Ocasio-Cortez's office and proponents have showed they were not ready for prime time and failed to describe how any of the promises and aspirational climate policy wishes found in the Green New Deal will be achieved. For example, the bill doesn't say how America will get to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions within 10 years. The bill doesn't spell out how we will meet 100 percent of U.S. power demand with renewable energy sources. The bill does not say how any of these provisions will be paid for despite the estimated \$93 trillion cost.⁴

Some critics believe that authors of the resolution were extremely vague on purpose because they know that when the actual mechanisms to achieve the policy goals of the Green New Deal are revealed they will lose significant support from the American people and organizations throughout the country. Accordingly, the Green New Deal cannot be treated as a serious policy proposal until we have more details. However, given the sheer number of people advocating for the Green New Deal and the fact that the Democratic Party is using it as a litmus test for presidential candidates, this Democratic Socialist proposal must be given proper attention. It is also unfair and misleading for Rep. Ocasio-Cortez to say this is her plan and that Republicans don't have a plan. Her plan is not a real plan at this juncture. It is a climate change wish list that is less likely to be adopted than an Obama budget proposal. Western Caucus and the Administration have a plan and that plan that is described in detail further below and been being implemented over the course of the last two years.

In the FAQ page Rep. Ocasio-Cortez deleted from her website, she stated the Green New Deal wants “to get rid of farting cows and airplanes.” While many people, including cosponsors of the bill have tried to distance themselves from those claims, the text of the Green New Deal is a direct attack on American agriculture seeking “to eliminate pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the agricultural sector as much as technologically feasible.”

Rep. Ocasio-Cortez's recently doubled down against the ranching community in a Showtime late-night talk show stating, “In the [Green New] Deal, what we talk about is ... that we need to take a look at factory farming, period. It's wild... And so, it's not to say you get rid of agriculture. It's not to say we're going to force everybody to go vegan or anything crazy like that. But it's to say, listen, we've got to address factory farming. Maybe we shouldn't be eating a hamburger for breakfast, lunch and dinner... We have to take a look at everything.”⁵

One version of the [FAQs](#) from Rep. Ocasio-Cortez's office provided to NPR stated the Green New Deal seeks to secure “economic security for all who are unable or unwilling to work.” Rep. Ocasio-Cortez's office claims this document was accidentally released even though it was the second version sent to the press. “The statements and FAQs at issue were not doctored. They were all produced by her staff. Now, Ocasio-Cortez is saying they were “draft” versions not ready for prime time. But the resolution also calls for ‘guaranteeing a job with a family-sustaining wage,’ plus benefits, to ‘all people of the United States.’”⁶

“The only document our office is officially standing by is the actual resolution that we published,” Saikat Chakrabarti, Ocasio-Cortez's chief of staff, told The Fact Checker on Saturday. “The job guarantee is in the resolution. We are absolutely not backing off from that or anything else in the resolution, like getting to a greenhouse gas neutral economy in 10 years, massively building up new clean manufacturing or transitioning off fossil fuels as fast as possible by rapidly deploying renewable power generation.”⁷

House Cosponsors

⁴ <https://www.americanactionforum.org/research/the-green-new-deal-scope-scale-and-implications/>

⁵ <https://thehill.com/homenews/house/431119-ocasio-cortez-explains-farting-cows-comment-weve-got-to-address-factory>

⁶ https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/02/11/whats-actually-green-new-deal-democrats/?utm_term=.1db7d3b11709

⁷ https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/02/11/whats-actually-green-new-deal-democrats/?utm_term=.1db7d3b11709

There are currently 89 cosponsors of Rep. Ocasio-Cortez's House bill including: Representatives Alma Adams (D-NC), Nanette Diaz Barragan (D-CA), Karen Bass (D-CA), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), Brendan Boyle (D-PA), Salud Carbajal (D-CA), Joaquin Castro (D-TX), Judy Chu (D-CA), David Cicilline (D-RI), Katherine Clark (D-MA), Yvette Clarke (D-NY), Lacy Clay (D-MO), Steve Cohen (D-TN), Gerald Connolly (D-VA), Joe Courtney (D-CT), Elijah Cummings (D-MD), Danny Davis (D-IL) Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA), Lloyd Doggett (TX-35), Eliot Engel (D-NY), Veronica Escobar (D-TX), Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Adriano Espaillat (D-NY), John Garamendi (D-CA), Jesus Garcia (D-IL), Jimmy Gomez (D-CA), Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), Debra Haaland (D-NM), Alcee Hastings (D-FL), Jahana Hayes (D-CT) Brian Higgins (D-NY), Jared Huffman (D-CA), Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), William Keating (D-MA), Joseph Kennedy (D-MA), Ro Khanna (D-CA), John Larson (D-CT), Barbara Lee (D-CA), Andy Levin (D-MI), Mike Levin (D-CA), Ted Lieu (D-CA), Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Alan Lowenthal (D-CA), Stephen Lynch (D-MA), Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Sean Maloney (D-NY), Doris Matsui (D-CA), Betty McCollum (D-MN), James McGovern (D-MA), Gregory Meeks, Gregory W. (D-NY), Grace Meng (D-NY), Seth Moulton (D-MA), Debbie Mucarsel-Powell (D-FL), Jerrod Nadler (D-NY), Grace Napolitano (D-CA), Joe Neguse (D-CO), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Jimmy Pannetta (D-CA), Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Mark Pocan (D-WI), Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), David Price (D-NC), Mike Quigley (D-IL), Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Kilili Camacho Sablan Gregorio (D-MP), Linda Sanchez (D-CA), John Sarbanes (D-MD), Janice Schakowsky (D-IL), Adam Schiff (D-CA), Bobby Scott (D-VA), Jose Serrano (D-NY), Brad Sherman (D-CA), Adam Smith (D-WA), Jackie Speier (D-CA), Eric Swalwell (D-CA), Thomas Suozzi (D-NY), Mark Takano (D-CA), Mike Thompson (D-CA), Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), Lori Trahan (D-MA), Juan Vargas (D-CA), Nydia Velazquez (D-NY), Maxine Waters (D-CA), Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ), Peter Welch, Peter (D-VT).

Senate Cosponsors

Senator Ed Markey introduced an identical Senate companion in the form of S.Res.59. There are currently 11 cosponsors including: Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Christopher Murphy (D-CT), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Ron Wyden (D-OR)

Presidential Candidate Endorsements

Several declared candidates for the 2020 presidential election are supporting the resolution including Senators Cory Booker (D-N.J.), former Mayor of San Antonio Julián Castro (D-TX), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Author Marianne Williamson (D-NY).

Potential candidates for the 2020 presidential election support the Green New Deal or its concept including: former Rep. Beto O'Rourke (D-TX), Governor Jay Inslee (D-WA), former Attorney General Eric Holder (D-NY), former Mayor Michael Bloomberg (D-NY), Rep. Eric Swalwell (D-CA), South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg (D-IN), former State Rep. Richard Ojeda (D-WV), previous Green Party candidate Jill Stein.

Witnesses and Potential Witnesses at the 2/26/19 Forum

- Michael Zehr, Federal Policy Advisor, Consumer Energy Alliance (Confirmed) ([Testimony](#))
- Myron Ebell, Director of Global Warming and International Environmental Policy, Competitive Enterprise Institute (Confirmed) ([Testimony](#))

- Katie Tubb, Policy Analyst for energy and environmental issues, Heritage Foundation (Confirmed) ([Testimony](#))
- Rick Manning, President, Americans for Limited Government (Confirmed) ([Testimony](#))
- Marc Morano, Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (CFACT) (Confirmed) ([Testimony](#))
- Dr. David Legates, Professor of Climatology, University of Delaware (Confirmed) ([Testimony](#))
- Thomas Pyle, President, American Energy Alliance (Confirmed) ([Testimony](#))
- Bill Imbergamo, Federal Forest Resource Coalition (Confirmed)
- Mandy Gunasekara, Founder & President, Energy 45 (Confirmed)
- Demond Drummer, Co-founder and Executive Director of New Consensus (Invited)
- Sierra Club (Invited)
- Sunrise Movement (Invited)
- Paul Krugman (Invited)
- Laborers' International Union of North America (Invited) ([Previous Statement](#))

Background

The first use of the term "Green New Deal" is most often attributed to New York journalist Thomas Friedman who advocated for the idea in two pieces published by the New York Times and the New York Times Magazine.⁸

In the Times' piece Friedman stated:

“If you have put a windmill in your yard or some solar panels on your roof, bless your heart. But we will only green the world when we change the very nature of the electricity grid – moving it away from dirty coal or oil to clean coal and renewables. And that is a huge industrial project – much bigger than anyone has told you. Finally, like the New Deal, if we undertake the green version, it has the potential to create a whole new clean power industry to spur our economy into the 21st century.”⁹

The Green New Deal Group published an eponymous report endorsing the concept on July of 2018.¹⁰ The proposal gained increased notoriety and traction when United Nations Environment Programme unveiled the Global Green New Deal in October of 2008.¹¹ The Green New Deal became a fundamental policy initiative of the Green Party and was included in presidential candidate Jill Stein's platform in 2012 and 2016.¹²

The Green New Deal first gained massive notoriety and media coverage as a result of efforts and publicity by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14) and the Sunshine Movement. More than 40 protesters were arrested during an advocacy effort.¹³ Rep. Ocasio-Cortez introduced a bill outlining the framework of the Green New Deal on February 13, 2019.¹⁴

The rest of the summary in this section is provided by Dave Roberts, a self-proclaimed big fan of universal housing and health care.¹⁵ It has been condensed for brevity. “If they're taken literally, then everyone who signs on should get a welcome letter from the Democratic Socialists of America...

⁸ <https://grist.org/article/whats-the-green-new-deal-the-surprising-origins-behind-a-progressive-rallying-cry/>

⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/19/opinion/19friedman.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.newstatesman.com/environment/2008/07/lynas-towards-economy-climate>

¹¹ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/environment/>

¹² <https://www.jill2016.com/plan>

¹³ <https://www.redstate.com/slee/2019/02/25/breaking-40-arrested-sunrise-movement-activists-storm-senate-office-building/>

¹⁴ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolution/109/text>

¹⁵ <https://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment/2019/2/7/18211709/green-new-deal-resolution-alexandria-ocasio-cortez-markey>

Electrification. It is widely acknowledged in the climate policy community that deep decarbonization will involve [rapid and substantial electrification](#). We know how to decarbonize electricity grids — so we need to get everything we can onto the grid.

That means two big things in particular.

First, the U.S. vehicle fleet needs to be electrified as fast as practicably possible. The resolution's 'investment in zero-emission vehicle infrastructure' hints at this, but scarcely conveys the needed scale and speed.

Second, the millions upon millions of buildings in the US that use natural gas for heat need to find a zero-carbon alternative, and quickly. There are some [zero-carbon liquid substitute fuels on the horizon](#), but for the time being, the best way we know to decarbonize HVAC (heating, ventilation, and cooling) is to rip out all those millions of furnaces and replace them with electric heat pumps. That's a big, big job that will create a ton of work and directly involve millions of people's homes and businesses.

As I said, most of the resolution consists of goals and policies that anyone who takes climate change seriously will find necessary. But down toward the bottom of the list of projects, the resolution really lets its hair down and gets funky. Readers who make it that far into the document will find some eyebrow-raising doozies.

Like No. 8: 'guaranteeing a job with a family-sustaining wage, adequate family and disability leave, paid vacations, and retirement security to all people of the United States.' Heyo! There's that job guarantee.

Or No. 9: 'strengthening and protecting the right of all workers to organize, unionize, and collectively bargain free of coercion, intimidation, and harassment.' A full-on right to unionize, okay.

11: 'enacting and enforcing trade rules, procurement standards, and border adjustments with strong labor and environmental protections to stop the transfer of jobs and pollution overseas and to grow domestic manufacturing in the United States.' And there's a liberal trade regime.

14: 'ensuring a commercial environment where every businessperson is free from unfair competition and domination by domestic or international monopolies.' All right, we're going after monopolies too.

And just to fill in the remaining gaps, 15: 'providing all members of society with high-quality health care, affordable, safe and adequate housing, economic security, and access to clean water, air, healthy and affordable food, and nature.' That is quite the addendum!

If you're keeping score at home, the Green New Deal now involves a federal job guarantee, the right to unionize, liberal trade and monopoly policies, and universal housing and health care.

Justice. Ordinary people matter. Emissions matter, yes. Costs and money matter. Technologies and policies matter. But they all matter secondarily, via their effects on ordinary people. The role of progressive politics, if it amounts to anything, is to center the safety, health, and dignity of ordinary people.

That means that justice — or as it's often called, 'environmental justice,' as though it's some boutique subgenre — must be at the heart of any plan to address climate change. The simple fact is that climate change will hit what the resolution calls 'frontline and vulnerable communities' (who have contributed

least to the problem) hardest. And attempts to transition away from fossil fuels threaten communities that remain tied to the fossil fuel economy...

Neoliberalism has also made old-fashioned public investment something of a taboo. The GND goes directly at it — public investment aimed at creating jobs is central to the project.

The preamble notes that ‘the Federal Government-led mobilizations during World War II and the New Deal era created the greatest middle class that the U.S. has ever seen’ and frames the GND as “a historic opportunity to create millions of good, high-wage jobs in the United States...”

Of the GND requirements, the very first is ‘providing and leveraging, in a way that ensures that the public receives appropriate ownership stakes and returns on investment, adequate capital (including through community grants, public banks, and other public financing), technical expertise, supporting policies, and other forms of assistance to communities, organizations, Federal, State, and local government agencies, and businesses working on the Green New Deal mobilization.’

Also in the requirements: funding education and job training for frontline communities in transition; investing in research and development; and investing in community ownership and resilience.”

Cost

The Congressional Budget Office has not completed a cost estimate of the bill. However, the Green New Deal is expensive. American Action Forum estimates that if the Green New Deal is enacted, every American household could have to pay \$65,000 per year to foot the bill and that the total price tag could reach \$93 trillion in the first 10 years alone.¹⁶

Liberal economist Noah Smith estimated that the cost of the Green New Deal without all the promises listed in the FAQ would be \$6.6 trillion annually. That is three times as much as the federal government collects in tax revenue and roughly 34% of U.S. GDP. Under the Green New Deal, Smith estimates that nearly 75% of the economy would be spent by the government.¹⁷

According to the American Action Forum:

- \$5.7 trillion of investment in renewable energy and storage is needed for the GND.¹⁸

Consumer Energy Alliance estimates:

- The collective costs of replacing four daily household appliances such as furnaces, water heaters, dryers and stoves would cost American families \$244 billion.¹⁹

Ronald Bailey, science correspondent for Reason estimates:

- It would cost at least \$7 trillion to transition to all-renewable electricity and close every nuclear, coal and natural gas plant in the country.²⁰

Here are figures for just a few of the Green New Deal’s goals as reported by Forbes:

¹⁶ <https://www.americanactionforum.org/research/the-green-new-deal-scope-scale-and-implications/>

¹⁷ <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-02-08/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-s-green-new-deal-is-unaffordable>

¹⁸ <https://www.americanactionforum.org/research/what-it-costs-go-100-percent-renewable/>

¹⁹ <https://consumerenergyalliance.org/2019/02/green-new-deal-could-cost-consumers-244-billion-replace-appliances/>

²⁰ <https://reason.com/blog/2017/06/21/powering-us-using-100-percent-renewable>

- According to respected physicist Christopher Clark, the proposed expansion of renewables to provide 100% of the nation’s power needs would cost about \$2.0 trillion or \$200 billion a year for ten years.
- According to the Electric Power Institute, the Green New Deal’s goal of building a “smart power grid” for the entire country, would cost some \$400 billion or \$40 billion a year for ten years.
- According to a McKinsey study, achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions would cost \$11 trillion or about \$110 billion a year for ten years.
- Upgrading every home and industrial building is conservatively estimated to cost \$2.5 trillion over ten years or about \$250 billion a year. This figure may much larger.
- The Green New Deal aims to provide jobs guarantees at a “living wage.” A government assessment of a similar proposal put the cost of such a program at \$543 billion in its first year and \$2.5 trillion over 10 years.
- The goal of developing a universal, single payer health-care system would cost about \$1.4 trillion a year.

The total conservative estimate for just these 6 policy goals found in the Green New Deal is approximately \$25 trillion in the first ten years alone.

And it could be much higher as the Mercatus Center estimates that the costs of the single-payer health care provision alone would cost \$32 trillion in the first 10 years.²¹

How Will We Pay for the Green New Deal?

- Nothing in the Green New Deal bill specifies how this legislation will be paid for.
- In their original FAQs page, Rep. Ocasio-Cortez’s office indicated they plan to pay for the GND the “same way we paid for the New Deal, the 2008 bank bailout...all our current wars...by the Federal Reserve extending credit...by creating new public banks that extend credit...by the government taking an equity stake in projects.”
- When asked, supporters of the Green Deal don’t have a well thought out solution to pay for it. Often, they instead claim the cost of inaction is higher or come up with some other spin that deflects from how much the Green New Deal will actually cost and how American taxpayers will pay for those costs.
- “IGNORING CLIMATE CHANGE WILL COST US MORE IN THE FUTURE” is not a valid pay for.

Funding these government giveaways would require massive tax increases. Taxes will be imposed on all Americans as the wealthy can’t pay for all these enormously expensive government programs. Even with massive tax increases, deficits would most likely still skyrocket.

What Opponents Are Saying About the Green New Deal

²¹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/miltonezrati/2019/02/19/the-green-new-deal-and-the-cost-of-virtue/#707cfbf3dec>

- “The green dream, or whatever they call it, nobody knows what it is, but they’re for it, right?” Speaker Nancy Pelosi in [Politico](#) 2/7/19.
- “What in the heck is this?” Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin on MSNBC’s [Morning Joe](#) 2/20/19.
- “We can’t green the economy without the power of the free-market system.” Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH) in [Roll Call](#) 2/21/19.
- “It’s just impracticable.” President Obama’s Secretary of Energy, Ernest Moniz on [NPR](#) 2/7/19.
- “I think the Green New Deal would be loser. There’s an argument that you don’t destabilize a society by doing too much change at once.” Former Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) to [CNBC](#) 2/19/19.
- “The American Action Forum’s analysis shows that the Green New Deal would bankrupt the nation. On the upper end, every American household would have to pay \$65,000 per year to foot the bill. The total price tag would be \$93 trillion over 10 years. That is roughly four times the value of all Fortune 500 companies combined. That’s no deal.” Senator John Barrasso in [Press Release](#) 2/25/19.
- “An aspirational climate policy wish list.” Democratic Socialist Ryan Cooper in [The Week](#) 2/13/19.
- “A needlessly long wish list.” [The New York Times](#)’ David Leonhardt 2/13/19.
- “An untrammled Dear Santa letter without form, purpose, borders, or basis in reality,” [National Review’s](#) Charles C. W. Cooke 2/12/19.
- It “overreaches in its desire to deliver a raft of expensive new entitlements -- guaranteed jobs, benefits, health care, housing, education, income and more.” [Bloomberg Opinion](#) columnist Noah Smith 2/12/19.
- “Other aspects of the Green New Deal seem wildly out of place for an environmental resolution. Consider the promise of massive new entitlement programs that could only be achieved through a radical redistribution of wealth. Here, the proposal shows its true colors. This is not some run-of-the-mill progressive policy – it is a Trojan Horse for socialism.” President and CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Thomas J. Donohue in [Above the Fold](#) 2/18/19.
- “The ‘Green New Deal’ resolution released today is filled with lessons. It is exactly how not to successfully enact desperately needed infrastructure investment. It is exactly how not to enact a progressive agenda to address our nation’s dangerous income inequality. And it is exactly how not to win support for critical measures to curb climate change... According to the resolution, a ‘Green New Deal’ would require every car to be electric-powered and ban all fossil fuels, among other proposals. It is difficult to take this unrealistic manifesto seriously, but the economic and social devastation it would cause if it moves forward is serious and real.” Terry O’Sullivan, General President of the Laborers’ International Union of North America in [press release](#) 2/7/19.

What Proponents Are Saying About the Green New Deal

- “This is going to be the Great Society, the moonshot, the civil rights movement of our generation. That is the scale of the ambition that this movement is going to require.” Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) in the [Hill](#) 12/3/18.
- “The Green New Deal is what it means to be progressive. Clean air, clean water, decarbonizing, green jobs, a just transition, and environmental justice are what it means to a progressive,” a young think tank whose work has substantially informed the GND. “By definition that means politicians who don’t support those goals aren’t progressive. We need to hold that line. Get on the GND train or choo-choo, motherf***r, we’re going to go right past you.” Sean McElwee director of Data Progress in [Vox](#) 2/7/19.
- “I will vote for it. It is a resolution. I believe the underlying principles behind it are sound and important. Climate change is truly an existential threat to our country.” Senator Kamala Harris (D-CA) in [SC press conference](#) 2/15/19.
- “With the revenue from the #UltraMillionaireTax, we could provide universal childcare for working parents across America. A path to student debt relief for those who need it. Down payments on a Green New Deal & Medicare for All.” Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) in [Tweet](#) 2/4/19.
- "In many ways, we think of our plan as the stimulus that Obama never really gave us. Our view is, this is going to be much bigger than that first stimulus, and it's going to be more than just a stimulus. We're thinking of it as a massive national reconstruction." Robert Hockett, a Cornell University law professor and senior adviser to Ocasio-Cortez, in [E&E News](#) 2/22/19.
- “I believe that America should lead, and it should lead boldly,” he continued, calling the Green New Deal a “bold idea” that would benefit the environment and the economy.” Cory Booker (D-NJ) released [video](#) from Iowa stop 2/8/19.
- “As President, my first executive order will recommit the United States to the Paris climate accord. We’re gonna say no to subsidizing big oil and say yes to passing a Green New Deal.” Former Mayor of San Antonio Julián Castro (D-TX) in the [Hill](#) 1/12/19.
- “A Green New Deal presents the opportunity to help transition from an economy of low wages and toxic pollution to one driven by dignified work and 100 percent clean energy.” Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune in [press release](#) 2/7/19.
- “The Green New Deal will be the most ambitious and transformative national project taken on since Franklin Roosevelt’s original New Deal and World War II economic mobilizations.” New Consensus in [summary](#) 2/19.
- “The difference between 2009 and 10 and today is the movement that has now been built, OK? We did not have that movement in 2009 and 10. This is now a voting issue across the country. The green generation has risen up.... We now have the troops, we now have the money, we’re ready to fight.” Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) in 2/13/19 [press conference](#).

Concerns with Green New Deal

Are the Costs Worth the Environmental Benefits?

Despite America's energy renaissance and emissions reductions, we continue to hear hyperbolic statements about pending climate catastrophe and the need for radical change to starve off future disaster. Some Democrat Socialists pushing the Green New Deal want to get rid of all energy sources except wind, solar and batteries by 2030. How are we going to do that when wind and solar only produced 7.6% of our electricity in 2017? And where are we going to dispose of all those batteries?

The Green New Deal would drive energy production and jobs to countries like China and India that have much worse environmental standards. Global greenhouse gas emissions will increase as a result, in direct contradiction to the main talking point of the Green New Deal. Western Caucus members want to keep those jobs in America and know that doing so will provide greater environmental benefits as the United States has the highest standards in the world.

From 2005 to 2017, the U.S. cut 862 million tons, a 14 percent decline. Over that same period, global emissions increased by 26 percent and China increased its emissions by 4 billion tons and India increased its carbon dioxide emissions by 1.3 billion tons— a 70 percent increase.

According to the Heritage Foundation, even if the “U.S. cut its carbon dioxide emissions 100 percent, it would not make a difference in abating global warming. Using the same climate sensitivity (the warming effect of a doubling of carbon dioxide emissions) as the U.N.’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change assumes in its modeling, the world would be only 0.137 degree Celsius cooler by 2100. Even if we assumed every other industrialized country would be equally on board, this would merely avert warming by 0.278 degree Celsius by the turn of the century.”²²

Possible Population Control

"Our planet is going to hit disaster if we don't turn this ship around and so it's basically like, there's a scientific consensus that the lives of children are going to be very difficult. "And it does lead, I think, young people to have a legitimate question, you know, 'Is it okay to still have children?'" Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) in [Instagram live](#) 2/24/19. This comment and any attempts at population control are of concern.

Potential Carbon Tax

The Green New Deal doesn't explicitly include a carbon tax. But it also doesn't rule out a carbon tax. It is intentionally vague on that aspect, stating that the GND must involve “accounting for the true cost of emissions.”

Australia Energy is Not a Model of Success

²² <https://www.heritage.org/energy-economics/commentary/green-new-deal-would-barely-change-earths-temperature-here-are-the>



If one needs more evidence that the Green New Deal is not plausible look no further than Australia. Renewable energy currently makes up roughly 19 percent of power generation and is projected to account for 59% of Australian electricity generation by 2040. Electricity prices are the highest in the world and the Aussies' obsession with renewables has destroyed their electric grid. Mass blackouts and mass power cuts are the new norm and a huge Tesla battery backup system ran dry this past month as the Aussie power grid crashed in summer temperatures.²³ 90,000 Aussie homes had no air conditioning for the next two weeks of blistering heat. Let's learn from Australia's mistakes, not repeat them.

Transportation Impacts and Eminent Domain

The Green New Deal also proposes removing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the entire transportation sector. Essentially, they want to get rid of the combustion-engine and replace our transportation system with electric vehicles and a mass-transit rail system that extends throughout the country. This means getting rid of all non-electric vehicles and possibly even targeting airplanes.

Rail has to be laid in a straight line so eminent domain would have to be used on a massive scale to build a high speed rail system that runs throughout the country. People would be kicked out of their homes to make room for this track.

California Governor Gavin Newsom recently cancelled the \$77 billion bullet train stating "linking the Bay Area and Los Angeles would cost too much and, respectfully, take too long." If mass transit can't work in LA and the Bay area, how is it going to work in rural America?

Costs of Jobs for All

The Green New Deal misleadingly guarantees a job with a family-sustaining wage, adequate family and medical leave, paid vacations, and retirement security to all people of the United States. They even had something in their now retracted FAQs page about economic security for all who are unable or unwilling to work. How will we pay for all this?

²³ <https://stopthesethings.com/2019/02/19/australias-obsession-with-hopelessly-intermittent-wind-solar-wrecking-entire-power-grid/>

Renewable Footprint

If we switched all current electricity to wind, the wind turbine footprint alone would take up 12% of the continental United States.²⁴ “Solar and wind power needs around 40-50 times more space than coal and 90-100 times more space than gas.”²⁵

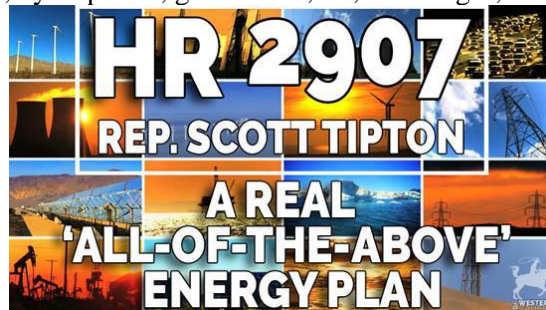
“Additionally, in order to build the thousands of new wind turbines and solar panels that would be needed to power the country, substantially more steel and rare earth minerals would need to be manufactured and mined... And where would the government build all these new wind and solar facilities? Even many of the most liberal, supposedly environmentally friendly communities in the country have rejected new wind farms because they don’t want the land around their homes filled with turbines.”²⁶

Socialism

The Green New Deal is an alarmist pipe dream that seeks to fundamentally “transform America” without a realistic blueprint. This socialist manifesto changes by the day and important details on how a transition of the Green New Deal’s magnitude will occur are missing, including how we will pay for this pie in the sky aspiration. “The bottom line is that the Green New Deal would transform gigantic sectors of the U.S. economy – energy, health care, college education, farming and potentially more – into huge socialist, government-run or managed programs that would be controlled by an army of bureaucrats in Washington.”²⁷

Western Caucus Alternative Vision

Members of the Western Caucus have a different vision for America. They support policies that increase, diversify, and facilitate the production and delivery of reliable and affordable energy supplies from all domestic sources. This vision doesn’t pick winners and losers and includes a true-all-of-the-above energy strategy. The Planning for American Energy Act, a bill introduced by Executive Vice-Chairman Scott Tipton, directs the Departments on the Interior and Agriculture to develop four-year energy production plans that include wind, solar, hydropower, geothermal, oil, natural gas, coal, oil shale and minerals.



²⁴ <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aae102/pdf>

²⁵ <https://phys.org/news/2018-08-renewable-energy-sources-space-fossil.html#jCp>

²⁶ <https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/democrats-green-new-deal-is-a-crazy-new-deal-that-would-be-a-disaster-for-us-all>

²⁷ <https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/democrats-green-new-deal-is-a-crazy-new-deal-that-would-be-a-disaster-for-us-all>

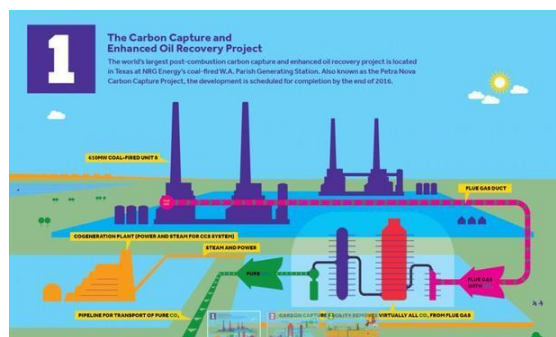
Members of the Western Caucus support personal responsibility, less government intervention in our daily lives and freedom. They defend property rights and believe that private ownership of property is a fundamental right in America.

Our vision encourages innovation and less burdensome mandates. Members of the Caucus support local control and believe that stewardship of our environment and natural resources is best accomplished by empowering local stakeholders. The people who depend on the land to provide security for their families and communities understand those resources best. States and municipalities are better suited to deal with local issues than distant, out-of-touch Washington bureaucrats.

The Caucus seeks to promote access to our nation’s energy and resource potential while pursuing a true all-of-the-above energy approach that aims to ensure the U.S. is the global energy leader. Our vision utilizes the current energy renaissance and American energy dominance policies currently being implemented by the Trump Administration and the state of Texas.

Texas leads the country in wind production. According to the U.S. Energy Department, Texas added more generating capacity than any other state last year and has more installed wind power capacity than all but five countries in the world.²⁸

The country’s only large clean capture coal facility is found in Texas. The Petra Nova facility is the only carbon capture and storage coal-fired power plant in the United States and is only one of two facilities that utilize this technology in the world.²⁹ Coal generates baseload power that prevents rolling black outs when renewables fall short in extreme weather.



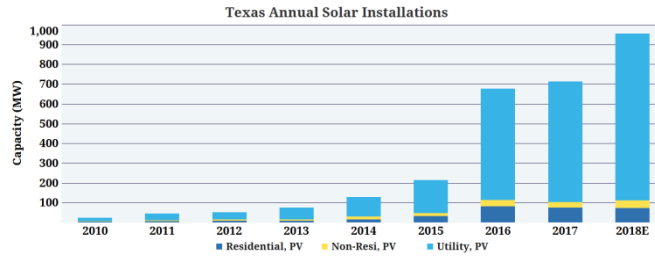
Texas has more education revenues than any other state because of revenues from an oil and gas fund. In 2017, oil and gas revenues brought in nearly \$3 billion dollar for the state of Texas. The fund provides roughly \$1 billion for education in the state of Texas each year.³⁰

According to a Q3 2018 report from the Solar Energy Industries Association, Texas is poised to become a nationwide leader in solar energy, with more than 4 GW of capacity expected to be installed over the next 5 years.

²⁸ <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/business/energy/article/Texas-wind-generation-keeps-growing-state-13178629.php>

²⁹ <http://www.digitaljournal.com/tech-and-science/technology/texas-power-plant-only-facility-in-us-with-carbon-capture-storage/article/506540#ixzz5gWhY6ikp>

³⁰ <https://www.texastribune.org/2018/01/05/hey-texplainer-how-does-texas-budget-use-taxes-oil-and-natural-gas-pro/>



There are two operating nuclear power plants in Texas. The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) previously reported that Texas is among the top 10 states with the greatest nuclear power generation capacity in the country.

U.S. Hydropower

Hydropower is a massive source of clean energy for the United States, especially the Pacific Northwest. According the National Hydropower Association, hydropower provides over 30 million homes with clean energy. The U.S. Department of Energy’s Hydropower Vision reports that hydropower will grow its 101 GW capacity by 50 GW by the year 2050. Currently, there are 2,198 active hydropower plants in forty-eight different states. Ten of those forty-eight states generate more than 10% of their electricity from hydropower. Hydropower accounted for 7% of total U.S. electric generation in 2013. Furthermore, the hydropower industry is responsible for employing 200,000-300,000 jobs in the United States with a projection of 1.4 million jobs by 2025.³¹

U.S. Nuclear

Nuclear power is by far the most reliable form energy operating with an average capacity factor greater than 90%. Nuclear power accounts for 55% of domestic emissions-free electricity generation and 20% of total electricity generation. In the United States there are 99 nuclear reactors in 30 states.³²

U.S. Oil and Gas

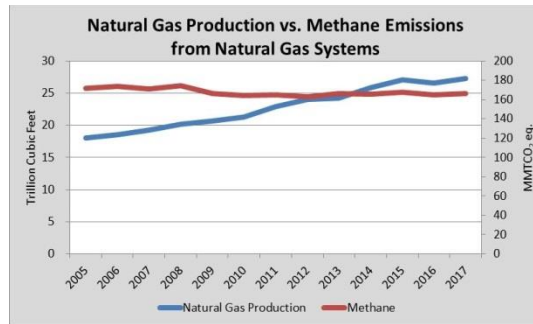
After decades of reliance on other countries to meet our energy needs, the U.S. Energy Information Administration projects that America will export more energy that it imports starting in 2020. We are no longer dependent on volatile foreign sources produced in Russia and Saudi Arabia. Recent innovation and technology improvements associated with fracking and horizontal drilling have allowed shale resources previously deemed uneconomical to be developed and are the main reason the U.S. was the world leader in carbon emissions reductions in 2015, 2016 and 2017. That’s right; fracking, demonized by environmental extremists without justification, has proven to be the best energy solution for our environment.

Abundant oil and natural gas has reduced electricity bills, kept gas prices low and provided the largest share of U.S. electric power generation in recent years. The oil and gas industry supports more than 10.3 million jobs and nearly 8 percent of our economy. Further, it is good for the environment. While production has risen significantly, methane emissions have decreased at the

³¹ <https://www.hydro.org/>

³² <https://www.publicpower.org/policy/nuclear-power>

same time. The EPA reports U.S. greenhouse gas emissions are already down 10% in last 10 years. CO2 emissions are down 12% in last 10 years. Methane emissions have been declining since 1991, down 16% since then.³³



U.S. Wind, Solar and Geothermal

Renewable energy sources like wind, solar and geothermal are an integral part of the United States' all-of-the-above energy strategy. Our nation's public lands can play a critical role in supporting that mission, but uncertainty in the permitting process impedes or delays our ability to harness their renewable energy potential. To address this problem, Western Caucus Members introduced the Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act. This legislation streamlines the permitting process for wind, solar and geothermal development on public lands and establishes a revenue sharing mechanism that ensures a fair return for all.

The American Dream

The United States is the world's top energy producer and the American Dream is thriving. January 2019 saw the 100th consecutive month of positive jobs growth in America; the longest period of continuous jobs growth on record. The U.S. job market is strong and in December employers posted 7.3 million open jobs, a new record.

The oil and gas industry alone supports more than 10.3 million workers and nearly 8 percent of our economy. Abundant oil and natural gas has reduced electricity rates, kept gas prices low and provided the largest share of U.S. electric power generation in recent years. Oil and gas revenues are the second largest income generator for the U.S. Treasury behind only taxes. In fiscal year 2016, Oil and gas revenues in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) generated nearly \$3 billion. While these are all things we should be proud of, our energy renaissance occurred despite overly restrictive policies by the previous administration that blocked access and stifled production.

Made in America

The oceans surrounding the U.S. hold tremendous energy potential. We now have a unique opportunity to encourage new exploration, leasing and production in untapped areas of the OCS. The OCS is estimated to contain nearly 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 90 billion barrels of oil. There is enough natural gas in the OCS to heat 100 million homes for 60 years

³³ <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/draft-inventory-us-greenhouse-gas-emissions-and-sinks-1990-2017>

and enough oil to replace current Persian Gulf imports for 59 years. In December 2016, President Obama unilaterally withdrew approximately 118.8 million offshore acres in the Arctic and Atlantic oceans, jeopardizing our energy security and killing good-paying jobs. In 2016, California purchased [108.3 million barrels of oil](#) from Saudi Arabia, at [\\$43.74](#) a barrel for average annual Brent Price. That is \$4.7 billion transferred from consumers in California to the Saudi royal family. There is no reason we shouldn't be producing that oil right here in America, especially as technological advances have made offshore development safe and environmentally responsible.

American Minerals

Domestic minerals are critical to our nation's national security, economic growth and manufacturing. Almost everything we use in our everyday lives has some sort of connections to minerals. Minerals that are mined right here in the U.S. allow for the production of cell phones and other high-end electronics, solar panels, bridges and cars.

Members of the Western Caucus support American mineral production. However, "of the 88 mineral commodities tracked by the U.S. Geological Survey, the United States is now at least 25 percent import dependent on 62 of them. Of the top 50 key minerals imported to the country, 28 come from China and 11 are from Russia."³⁴ The U.S. Department of the Interior released a detailed report that found the "United States is most reliant on China for critical minerals with at least 20 critical minerals being sourced exclusively in China. Russia, South Africa, Brazil and Canada also supply many of our minerals."³⁵ Members of the Western Caucus support reversing these trends, increasing access to these resources and creating good-paying jobs in America.

Healthy Forests and Healthy Watersheds

Wildfires are worse today and more catastrophic because of frivolous lawsuits filed by extremist organizations and a refusal by some Democratic Members in Congress to adopt bipartisan, active management policies that combat dangerous wildfires before they get started.

Testimony at a 2019 House Committee on Natural resources Hearing revealed, "At least 58 million acres of national forest are at high or very high risk of severe wildfire, and over 4.5 million homes are at risk. Over 1.1 million acres of national forest need reforestation. But last year the U.S. Forest Service treated less than 204,000 acres, a small fraction of what's needed. A significant part of the problem is process and paperwork. It typically takes 18 months to four years for federal agencies to develop and implement forest projects. Forest Service employees typically spend 40 percent of their time doing paperwork instead of managing forests.

Catastrophic fires are the result of decades of fire suppression, coupled with unprecedented fuel buildups due to a lack of forest management activity. These catastrophic fires destroy valuable timber resources but also degrade many of the other uses of healthy forests. In one 2014 fire, nearly 20,000 acres of high-quality northern spotted owl habitat burned. In fact, over the past two decades, wildfire has become the greatest source of habitat loss for the northern spotted owl."³⁶

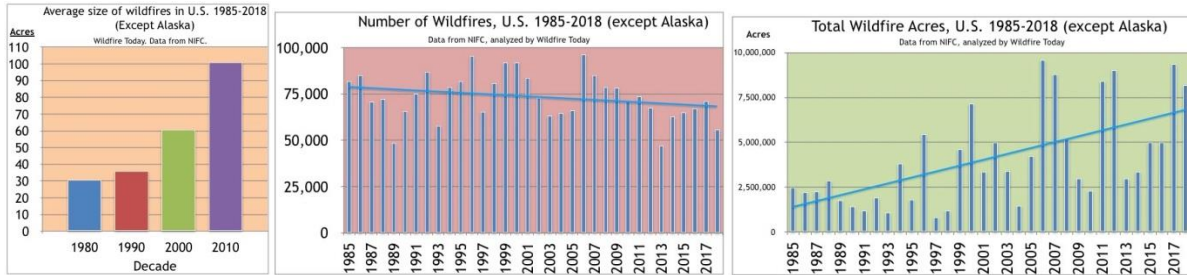
³⁴ <https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/356729-a-renaissance-to-reverse-us-strategic-minerals-imports-dig-baby>

³⁵ <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/groundbreaking-report-us-reliant-china-russia-other-foreign-nations-many-critical>

³⁶ <http://amforest.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/LFite-Testimony-for-House-NR-Investigations-Oversight.pdf>

The Green New Deal’s FAQ claimed multiple times that simply planting a lot of trees will sequester carbon and fight global warming. This concept came from the think tank Data for Progress Green New Deal report which seeks to reforest 40 million acres of public and private land by 2035. The solution is not simply adding more trees, its adding more healthy trees.

The Forest Service only harvested 2.5 billion board feet in 2016 compared to over 10 billion board feet in 1990. As timber harvests and active management have decreased, catastrophic wildfires have increased significantly. There is a direct correlation as evidenced by the below graphics.



Source: Wildfiretoday.com

America has more trees than we did 100 years ago. We have been steadily enlarging forests since the 1940s.³⁷ Healthy forests sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They also improve watershed health. Our forests are over stocked typically holding 100 to 200+ trees per acre. Healthy forests have 40 to 60 trees per acre. As trees burn, they release the carbon stored within their leaves, roots and trunks.

Lots of trees burning close together in a large wildfire can contribute significant CO2 to the atmosphere. According to the National Alliance of Forest Owners, “Providing a continuing cycle of planting, growing and harvesting, active forest management optimizes a forest’s ability to sequester and store carbon and improves resiliency, maintaining the ability to sequester carbon in the future. Harvested trees made into wood products continue to store the carbon they captured as growing trees. Forests in the United States offset 12-15% of our emissions each year. With good policy, there is potential to do even more.”

Smoke from wildfires causes serious disorders, including reduced bronchitis, exacerbation of asthma, lung and other breathing issues and even premature death. A wildfire in 2017 in Seeley Lake, Montana set a record for the worst air quality ever recorded there - 18 times greater than EPA’s safe particle limit.

The Northern California wildfire last year garnered national attention with associated costs in the billions, more than 85 people confirmed dead and more than 200 people considered missing.

While these costs were devastating, the negative impacts on our environment were also significant. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, wildfires in California in 2018 released the rough equivalent of 68 million tons of heat-trapping carbon dioxide – about the same amount of carbon emissions as are produced in a year to provide electricity to the entire state.

Even PolitiFact reports, “Wildfires produce more of one key pollutant, particulate matter, than cars, both in California and nationwide... Particulate matter is a mixture of microscopic

³⁷ http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/x4995e.htm#P56_2748

particles and liquid droplets that, when inhaled, can affect the heart and lungs and cause serious health problems.”

The House passed numerous bipartisan authorizations last Congress that would help reduce carbon emissions associated with catastrophic wildfires. These include 10 categorical exclusions as well as several provisions spearheaded by Mr. Westerman, Gianforte and other Members of the Western Caucus.

If you care about reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preventing the loss of human life, we must adopt forward-thinking management policies that result in healthy forests and healthy watersheds. These are bipartisan solutions that we should all support and that are currently being pursued by members of the Western Caucus.