

That Time Andrew Wheeler Lied About Climate Change (Again)

APRIL 11, 2019 BY MOLLY RAUCH

When it comes to climate change, there's a new front in the Trump Administration's war on climate action: Promote a policy that will vastly increase climate pollution, then lie about its climate impact.

This approach was on full display last week when EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler defended the Trump Administration's attack on car pollution standards. Despite the administration's own analysis showing that Trump's proposal to roll back clean **car standards would increase climate pollution by 7.4 billion metric tons** as compared to our existing program, Wheeler had the gall to insist that, when it comes to carbon dioxide emissions, the Trump proposal was about the same.

There is **global consensus** that we are facing, in climate change, an economic, public health, ecologic, and humanitarian crisis of unprecedented scale. Thus far, the Trump Administration has responded to this reality with both straight out **denialism** (denying that climate change is happening) and **minimization** (admitting that climate change is happening, but insisting it's a problem we don't need to address). The new strategy — pretending that deeply harmful proposals will actually help fix climate change — represents a new low in the annals of manipulation.

The transportation sector is **the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions** in the US, accounting for 30% of climate-warming pollution. Yet last year, Trump proposed to loosen standards for greenhouse gas emissions from passenger cars — a blunt denunciation of the urgency of climate change. It was the action of an administration cynically serving the wishes of the oil industry.

The proposal is crystal clear about the climate impact of the rollback: it would increase climate pollution between now and 2100 by **7.4 billion metric tons**. For context, U.S. annual emissions total about **6.5 billion** metric tons, across all sectors. 7.4 billion metric tons of increased carbon dioxide pollution is an obviously significant contribution to global climate change, by any measure.

Yet, when I asked at the Washington Auto Show last week how he can justify such a significant increase in dangerous climate pollution given the harmful impacts of climate change, Administrator Wheeler said, “Actually, if you look at our proposal versus the Obama proposal, it gets about the same amount of CO2 benefit.” (He touted the same line at a House appropriations hearing earlier in the week.)

Well, Mr. Wheeler, I am looking. And what I see in your proposal is far from “the same amount” of climate pollution. Indeed, referring to your proposal as having “CO2 benefit” is deeply offensive to me as a mom, as well as the more than one million members of Moms Clean Air Force, who recognize that climate change is a grave and urgent threat to our children’s health and future.

The **clean car standards** have already proven achievable and cost effective for the auto industry. They have delivered the cleanest and most efficient vehicles the American people have ever known. They save families hundreds of billions at the pump, protect against gas spikes, and reduce our reliance on foreign oil. Weakening these standards will harm our climate, our health, our pocketbooks — and even our jobs. A Trump Administration advisor has estimated that this rollback will come **at the expense of 236,000 jobs by 2035**.

We need to be aggressively ratcheting down climate pollution in order to protect our families and our communities. All the better if these efforts are also protecting our health, saving us money, and adding jobs to the economy. **A majority of Americans** acknowledge climate change is happening, and want to see action on this issue. Perhaps that is why Wheeler’s new tactic involves pretending his high-pollution policies are actually cutting pollution.

But hey, why quibble? What’s a few billion tons of pollution, anyways? It’s not like climate change is the most profound threat to the health, safety, and future of our children that the world has ever known, right?

Source: <https://www.momscleanairforce.org/that-time-andrew-wheeler-lied-about-climate-change-again/>