

Let's Put a Stop to Climate Alarmism

By Senator Lamar Alexander

A lot of people want Americans to believe that without government intervention, climate change will become a cataclysmic threat. Whether through exaggerated claims, worst case scenarios, inflated projections, skewed statistics, or biased data, the goal is to scare the public into supporting costly regulations that will do very little to address global warming.

How do we know climate change is not the threat the doomsayers say it is?

While in Paris for the United Nations conference, former President Obama attempted to tie recent flooding in Miami, Florida, to climate change. Obama said, "... even today you can put a price on the damage that climate change is doing. You go down to Miami and when it's flooding at high tide on a sunny day and fish are swimming through the middle of the streets — you know, that there's a cost to that."

The president was immediately contradicted by meteorologists at the National Weather Service, who concluded that the unusually high tides were a result of lunar cycles, along with strong winds, not climate change.

This isn't the first time global warming fanatics have spread false information. They often suggest that hurricanes, tornadoes, and droughts have increased as a result of climate change. Unfortunately, the facts don't support these claims.

Hurricanes in the U.S. have not increased in frequency, intensity or damage since at least 1900. Government data also indicates no association between climate change and tornadoes or droughts.

So if science doesn't support a link between extreme weather events and climate change, why do people keep making exaggerated statements they must know aren't true?

1. They make unrealistic predictions.

The climate is always changing and human activity may play a role. But what climate alarmists say is sometimes untrue and often exaggerated. We should rely on good science, not science fiction, when we evaluate climate change.

People like Al Gore often warn of melting of ice caps, rising oceans, uninhabitable cities and extreme temperatures. But predictions looking fifty to a hundred years into the future are not reliable and have close to no chance of being correct. Many climate models from the 1990s significantly overstated global warming and have proven to be wrong. Any prediction made so far into the future is little more than a complete guess — or a scare tactic.

2. Climate fanatics ignore the scientific method.

The scientific method calls for inquiry based on measurable evidence. Unfortunately, these so called scientists ignore good science and seek only to advance a political agenda. Real scientists welcome outside critiques, which are an integral part of the scientific method. Instead, those who raise valid questions about the very real uncertainties of climate change have their motives attacked, reputations savaged and livelihoods threatened.

Real scientists never claim certainty and always avoid exaggeration. Alarmists, on the other hand, promote a political agenda and dismiss any opposition. Claiming that the debate is settled is the opposite of the scientific method.

3. The climate fanatics dismisses technological solutions.

Left wing climate scientists often praise technological advances as essential to our future. But when it comes to climate change, innovations take a back seat to political agendas.

A better solution is to lead with technology, as America has always done. It's the scientists, researchers, engineers and inventors

who will find real solutions. If the administration is serious about confronting a challenge, it should seek high tech solutions instead of burdensome and ineffective regulations.

4. They use biased studies.

Climate alarmists frequently claim that "97 percent of scientists believe in climate change." The underlying study examined 12,000 abstracts from 1991-2011 that mentioned climate change.

But only 33 percent endorsed global warming and 66 percent took no position. Of those who endorsed global warming, 97 percent said humans were responsible for some amount, not necessarily "most." So the 97 percent figure applies to less than one-third of those included in the study. All this is to say that the 97 percent claim is false. So why does the president use it?

To engage in these types of exaggerations and distortions does a disservice to the American people, who deserve non-fiction, not science fiction.