DECEMBER 4, 2009

An Open Letter to Congress from U.S. Scientists on Climate Change and Recently Stolen Emails

As U.S. scientists with substantial expertise on climate change and its impacts on natural ecosystems, our built environment and human well-being, we want to assure policy makers and the public of the integrity of the underlying scientific research and the need for urgent action to reduce heat-trapping emissions. In the last few weeks, opponents of taking action on climate change have misrepresented both the content and the significance of stolen emails to obscure public understanding of climate science and the scientific process.

We would like to set the record straight.

The body of evidence that human activity is the dominant cause of global warming is overwhelming. The content of the stolen emails has no impact whatsoever on our overall understanding that human activity is driving dangerous levels of global warming. The scientific process depends on open access to methodology, data, and a rigorous peer-review process. The robust exchange of ideas in the peer-reviewed literature regarding climate science is evidence of the high degree of integrity in this process.

As the recent letter[1] to Congress from 18 leading U.S. scientific organizations, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Geophysical Union, and the American Meteorological Society, states:

> "Observations throughout the world make it clear that climate change is occurring, and rigorous scientific research demonstrates that the greenhouse gases emitted by human activities are the primary driver. These conclusions are based on multiple independent lines of evidence, and contrary assertions are inconsistent with an objective assessment of the vast body of peer-reviewed science. … If we are to avoid the most severe impacts of climate change, emissions of greenhouse gases must be dramatically reduced."

These "multiple independent lines of evidence" are drawn from numerous public and private research centers all across the United States and beyond, including several independent analyses of surface temperature data. Even without including analyses from the UK research center from which the emails were stolen, the body of evidence underlying our understanding of human-caused global warming remains robust.

We urge you to take account of this as you make decisions on climate policy.

[1] Letter to Congress on Climate Change from 18 Scientific Societies, October 21, 2009
www.aaas.org/go/climate_letter

The Endorsers of
An Open Letter to Congress from U.S. Scientists on Climate Change and Recently Stolen Emails
Updated December 7, 2009

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