

Princeton Physicist Tells Congress Earth in 'CO2 Famine' -- Increase 'Will Be Good for Mankind'

Dr. Will Happer, once fired by Al Gore, challenges former vice president's much-published claim that warming debate over.

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When former Vice President Al Gore said the science was settled on the issue of global warming [before Congress in 2007](#), he might have meant it was settled as far as people that he would allow to work for him.

Dr. William Happer, currently a professor of Physics at Princeton University, was once [fired by Gore at the Department of Energy in 1993](#) for disagreeing with the vice president on the effects of ozone to humans and plant life, also disagrees with Gore's claim that manmade carbon dioxide (CO₂) increases the temperature of the earth and is a threat to mankind. Happer appeared before the U.S. Senate's Environment and Public Works Committee on Feb. 25 and explained CO₂ is in short-supply in relative terms of the history of the planet.

"Many people don't realize that over geological time, we're really in a CO₂ famine now. Almost never has CO₂ levels been as low as it has been in the Holocene [geologic epoch] – 280 [parts per million (ppm)] – that's unheard of," Happer said. "Most of the time, it's at least 1,000 [ppm] and it's been quite higher than that."

Happer said that when CO₂ levels were higher – much higher than they are now, the laws of nature still managed to function as we understand them today.

"The earth was just fine in those times," Happer said. "You know, we evolved as a species in those times, when CO₂ levels were three or four times what they are now. And, the oceans were fine, plants grew, animals grew fine. So it's baffling to me that, you know, we're so frightened of getting nowhere close to where we started."

That directly conflicts with the line Gore has been telling the media for years. In November 2007, Gore told NBC's "Today" that there was "as strong a consensus as you'll ever see in science" that global warming was caused by mankind.

The chairwoman of the EPW committee, Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., has long supported Gore's "global warming battle." During Wednesday's hearing, she was skeptical of Happer's view, stating a lot had changed in the 80 million years. But Happer explained that the laws of science had not changed.

"Well, I don't think that the laws of nature, physics and chemistry have changed in 80 million year," Happer said. "Eighty million years ago, the earth was a very prosperous place and there's no reason to think it will suddenly become bad now."

Happer claimed that in fact, an increase in CO₂ levels wouldn't be a bad thing at all, but a good thing for humanity.

"Increasing concentrations of CO₂ in the atmosphere will cause some warming of the earth's surface," Happer said. "The key question is will the net effect of the warming and any other effects of CO₂ be good or bad for humanity? I believe the increase of CO₂ will be good."

Happer explained to the committee that the global warming movement mirrors the temperance movement that led to Prohibition in the 1920s. He claimed the movement has enlisted various elements of society, including the media, to promote their cause. He noted his opinion that children are being misused to spread the "climate catastrophe" movement's message.

"Like the Temperance Movement a hundred years ago, the climate catastrophe movement has enlisted the mass media, leadership of scientific societies, trustees of charitable foundations, many other influential people to their cause," Happer said. "Even elementary school teachers and writers of children's books terrify our children with the idea of impending climate doom. Children should not be force-fed propaganda masquerading as science."

Also accompanying Happer on the Senate panel were Dr. R.K. Pachauri, chairman of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Dr. Christopher Field director of the Department of Global Ecology at the Carnegie Institution for Science, and Dr. Howard Frumkin, director of the National Center for Environmental Health.

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