



Southern Baptist Convention

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On Global Warming

San Antonio, TX - 2007

Tags: global warming

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WHEREAS, God is not a distant bystander with respect to human affairs, but judges all people and holds them accountable for their thoughts and actions (Psalm 24:1; Isaiah 45:5-8; Hebrews 4:12-13); and

WHEREAS, Christians are called by God to exercise caring stewardship and dominion over the earth and environment (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 8); and

WHEREAS, We share God's concern that the poor should not be abused, taken advantage of, nor overburdened (Psalm 140:12; Proverbs 14:31; 29:7; Isaiah 25:4; Ezekiel 22:29, 31; Matthew 25:40; John 14:15); and

WHEREAS, The record shows that global temperature has risen and fallen cyclically throughout geologic history, with some periods warmer and others cooler than the present; and

WHEREAS, The global temperature has generally risen since 1850 as it recovers from the "Little Ice Age" (1550-1850 A.D.); and

WHEREAS, The ten warmest years since 1850 have occurred in the last fifteen years; and

WHEREAS, The scientific community is divided regarding the extent to which humans are responsible for recent global warming; and

WHEREAS, Many scientists reject the idea of catastrophic human-induced global warming; and

WHEREAS, Sixty international experts in climate and related sciences signed an open letter on April 6, 2006, to Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper stating that scientific evidence does not support the computer models of catastrophic human-induced global warming; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), while remaining

politically active in warning of catastrophic human-induced global warming, has recently altered many of its previous statements, reducing its projections of the magnitude of global warming and its impacts on the world; and

WHEREAS, Many scientists argue that natural causes such as El Niño, alterations in solar energy, solar wind output, cycles of cosmic ray influx, precipitation microphysics, and changes in cloud forcing—along with human-land-use conversion for cities and agricultural use and deforestation—are much more significant in climate change than CO₂ emissions; and

WHEREAS, Certain areas of the world, where some say warming is most pronounced, were actually much warmer than they are today, like Greenland, which was extensively farmed by the Vikings from around 1000 to 1300 A.D., before colder temperatures made farming virtually impossible for them; and

WHEREAS, Measures to curb global warming, such as those contained in the United Nations-sponsored Kyoto Protocol, are estimated to only reduce the likely rise in the average global temperature by 10 percent or less, from an increase of 2.0o C to 1.9o C by 2100, for example; and

WHEREAS, Some estimate that compliance with Kyoto would cost the global economy from about \$200 billion to \$1 trillion each year without a policy that would allow for global carbon emissions trading and \$75 billion each year even with a worldwide trading scheme; and

WHEREAS, Large developing countries such as China, India, and Brazil are currently exempt from Kyoto; and

WHEREAS, Exempting emerging economies like China, India, and Brazil from CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions reductions would significantly undermine the minute effect on average global temperature gained through reductions by developed nations; and

WHEREAS, Forcing developing countries to comply with Kyoto will significantly inhibit their economic development and the development of the international economy; and

WHEREAS, Proposed carbon offset programs will have little impact on reducing rising temperatures if human activity is not a significant cause of recent global warming; and

WHEREAS, Some are proposing that a maximum acceptable global temperature increase should serve as the guideline for determining reductions in CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, Businesses and municipalities will likely pass along the cost of emissions reduction programs to consumers, driving up the cost of goods and services; and

WHEREAS, Poor people and underdeveloped regions of the world will be impacted the most severely by higher costs; and

WHEREAS, The poor and most vulnerable people around the world are faced with many more quantifiable, immediate, devastating problems; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in San Antonio, Texas, June 12-13, 2007, urge Southern Baptists to proceed cautiously in the human-induced global warming debate in light of conflicting scientific research; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we consider proposals to regulate CO2 and other greenhouse gas emissions based on a maximum acceptable global temperature goal to be very dangerous, since attempts to meet the goal could lead to a succession of mandates of deeper cuts in emissions, which may have no appreciable effect if humans are not the principal cause of global warming, and could lead to major economic hardships on a worldwide scale; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge Congress and the president to only support cost-effective measures to reduce CO2 and other greenhouse gas emissions and to reject government-mandated reductions in greenhouse gas emissions; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge governments to begin to take steps to help protect vulnerable communities and regions from the effects of the inevitable continued cycles of warming and cooling that have occurred throughout geologic history; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we strongly request that all public policy decision makers ensure an appropriate balance between care for the environment, effects on economies, and impacts on the poor when considering programs to reduce CO2 and other greenhouse gas emissions; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we support the development of environmental public policy that will improve the stewardship of the earth's resources without resulting in significant negative consequences not only on the United States and other developed economies, but also, and most importantly, on the poor and on developing economies; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we support public policy that helps provide immediate assistance to the poor and most vulnerable people around the world, including access to clean drinking water and electricity, AIDS care and prevention, vaccinations, malaria eradication, and education programs; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we continually reaffirm our God-given responsibility to care for the earth by remaining environmentally conscious and taking individual and collective efforts to reduce pollution, decrease waste, and improve the environment in tangible and effective ways.

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