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Setting national health priorities: Trump and climate change

**(Publisher’s note: This opinion piece has underlines throughout the text. In the online version of the article the underlined portions are all clickable links to the source material Dr. Orient refers to. The online articlce is available at** [**www.wtxcc.com**](http://www.wtxcc.com) **in the Archive section in the 2018 folder. File: 01-11-18-OPED.docx)**

The Trump Administration has announced the removal of climate change from the list of national security threats. This Obama Administration priority was responsible for policies such as trying to make the U.S. Navy a [“Great Green Fleet”](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fdddusmma.wordpress.com%2F2016%2F01%2F22%2Fgreen-fleet-nonsense%2F) running on “advanced biofuels.” The rationale was that global warming (renamed “climate change”) was a bigger threat than terrorist attacks or North Korean nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles, and that running aircraft carriers on a blend of 90% diesel and a very costly additive made from beef fat or palm oil would somehow protect against bad weather over the next century.

Climate change is also supposed to be the [greatest global health threat](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fmailchi.mp%2Fddponline%2Fcciq-week-637969%3Fe%3D21297d86f3), according to a [consortium of medical organizations](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fmedsocietiesforclimatehealth.org%2F) and Pope Francis, who oppose President Trump’s decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement. The predicted climate disruption is evidently worse than poverty, AIDS, poor sanitation, Ebola, or other emerging infectious diseases, in their opinion. It is, indeed, supposed to worsen those factors, for example by increasing the range of insect vectors like mosquitoes. (Never mind that mosquitoes thrive in Alaska and Siberia.)

Fifty years of public health gains could be reversed, warn 22 authors in the prestigious [British journal The Lancet](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.thelancet.com%2Fjournals%2Flancet%2Farticle%2FPIIS0140-6736%2817%2932464-9%2Ffulltext), if we don’t take urgent action to limit emissions of carbon dioxide from the fuels that now power 80 percent of the world’s economy (coal, oil, and natural gas—“fossil fuels”). The “planet still has time to heal,” they say, but we are on a “countdown.”

It’s a little hard to get the public aroused about heat waves 50 years from now, while people are shoveling “heart attack snow,” or trying to keep from freezing to death. Deaths from cold are historically [far more prevalent than deaths from heat waves](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.co2science.org%2Farticles%2FV20%2Foct%2Fa13.php). Arctic cold is setting dozens of records for low temperatures in the U.S. Northeast, and a [Siberian cold front](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.telegraph.co.uk%2Fnews%2Fpicturegalleries%2Fworldnews%2F9051921%2FSiberian-cold-front-sweeps-across-Europe-bringing-record-low-temperatures.html) has already killed dozens in Central and Eastern Europe, with 50-year record lows as far south as Bulgaria.

European countries such as England and Germany that are taking the lead on turning to “renewables” – the German Energiewende – prices for fuel and electricity have soared. Many people have to choose whether to “heat or eat.”

It takes an apocalyptic threat to get people to accept economic hardship. The UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and prominent U.S. academics constantly trumpet a litany of horribles that will supposedly be inevitable without drastic, immediate changes. [California and other jurisdictions claim](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ddponline.org%2F2017%2F10%2F20%2Fclimate-change-iq-question-6-why-cant-all-states-emulate-californias-proposed-clean-energy-standards%2F) that they will take unilateral action to “protect” or “stabilize” earth’s climate despite Trump’s opposition. Dozens of Congressmen of both parties have joined the [Climate Solutions Caucus](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ddponline.org%2F2017%2F09%2F11%2Fddp-climate-change-iq-project%2F%23more-416) to oppose Trump.

President Trump’s priority is energy security—or energy dominance for America. His initiatives include:

• Removing climate alarmism messages from official government websites;

• Cutting the funding of the multi-billion dollar infrastructure devoted to “finding” human-caused climate change and promoting an agenda of global energy rationing;

• Demanding that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) include all scientific viewpoints instead of silencing critics of the “sky is falling” narrative; and

• Rolling back Obama regulations and policies designed to kill the coal industry and suppress use of America’s petroleum and natural gas resources.

The world’s greatest killer is poverty. Prosperity depends on adequate, reliable, affordable energy. [Income rises with increased use of hydrocarbons (and CO2 emissions)](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gapminder.org%2Ftools%2F%23_state_time_value%3D2013%3B%26marker_axis%2F_y_which%3Dco2%2F_emissions%2F_tonnes%2F_per%2F_person%26domainMin%3Anull%26domainMax%3Anull%26zoomedMin%3Anull%26zoomedMax%3Anull%26scaleType%3DgenericLog%3B%3B%3B%26chart-type%3Dbubbles), and [life expectancy rises with income](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.gapminder.org%2Fanswers%2Fhow-does-income-relate-to-life-expectancy%2F).

But perhaps even more important to public health than energy is scientific integrity. Trump is basically at odds with [the self-anointed scientific authorities](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ddponline.org%2F2017%2F11%2F08%2Fclimate-change-iq-question-8-are-government-sponsored-climate-scientists-the-only-credible-sources-of-information-relating-to-climate-change-policy%2F) that demand that their computer models be accepted as gospel and used to impose trillions of dollars in costs. This authoritarianism garbed in science is in itself a disaster. Moreover, the models give wrong answers, and the policy recommendations are all pain for no gain. To demonstrate this, Doctors for Disaster Preparedness posed [10 Climate Change IQ Questions](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ddponline.org%2Fcategory%2Fcciq%2F) to the Climate Solutions Caucus, inviting them to seek a refutation from their go-to experts. So far, not a single argument has been presented.

President Trump’s initiatives on energy and climate challenge medical and public health authorities to prove their anti-carbon case, instead of just imposing it on the world. That is both a national security and a health priority.

Jane M. Orient, M.D. obtained her undergraduate degrees in chemistry and mathematics from the University of Arizona in Tucson, and her M.D. from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1974. She is the author of [*YOUR Doctor Is Not In: Healthy Skepticism about National Healthcare*](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.amazon.com%2FYour-Doctor-Not-Skepticism-National%2Fdp%2F0517590115), and the second through fourth editions of[*Sapira's Art and Science of Bedside Diagnosis*](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.goodreads.com%2Fbook%2Fshow%2F2543438.Sapira_s_Art_and_Science_of_Bedside_Diagnosis) published by Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins. She authored books for schoolchildren, [*Professor Klugimkopf’s Old-Fashioned English Grammar* and *Professor Klugimkopf’s Spelling Method*](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.robinsonbooks.com%2Fproducts%2Fprofessor-klugimkopfs-old-fashioned-english-grammar), published by Robinson Books, and coauthored two novels published as Kindle books[, *Neomorts*](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.amazon.com%2FNeomorts-Jane-Orient-ebook%2Fdp%2FB006M3CGNS%2Fref%3Dsr_1_1%3Fs%3Dbooks%26ie%3DUTF8%26qid%3D1470797683%26sr%3D1-1%26keywords%3Dneomorts) and [*Moonshine*](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.amazon.com%2FMoonshine-Linda-Wright-ebook%2Fdp%2FB0071MZVNQ%2Fref%3Dsr_1_1%3Fs%3Dbooks%26ie%3DUTF8%26qid%3D1470797786%26sr%3D1-1%26keywords%3DMoonshine%2BJane%2BOrient). More than 100 of her papers have been published in the scientific and popular literature on a variety of subjects including risk assessment, natural and technological hazards and nonhazards, and medical economics and ethics. She is the editor of [*AAPS News*](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Faapsonline.org%2F), the [*Doctors for Disaster Preparedness Newsletter*](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ddponline.org%2F), and [*Civil Defense Perspectives*](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.physiciansforcivildefense.org%2F), and is the managing editor of the [*Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons*](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=41340667&msgid=460802&act=PU1Q&c=917709&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.jpands.org%2F).