



July 28, 2014

The Honorable Rick Scott, Governor
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott,

Grace and peace to you in Christ Jesus. I live in Pembroke Pines, Florida, and am the Founder and National Spokesman of an evangelical ministry, The Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation, a network of nearly 60 evangelical theologians, scientists, economists, and other scholars dedicated to Biblical earth stewardship, economic development for the poor, and the proclamation and defense of the gospel of Christ.

Recently Rev. Mitchell Hescoc, President of the Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN), requested to meet with you to discuss the threats of anthropogenic climate change to Florida, saying, “Sea level rise, more extreme weather, saltwater contaminated wells, loss of farm land and increased air pollution all pose significant threats to the health and well-being of Floridians.” Rev. Hescoc described this as a “pro-life” concern and claims to speak for over 60,000 pro-life Florida Christians.

We at the Cornwall Alliance take a different—more scientifically, economically, and morally justified—view of climate change. We believe, as expressed in the *Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming* (copy enclosed; endorsed by over 500 evangelical leaders, including climate scientists, other scientists, environmental and developmental economists, theologians and pastors, and other scholars, plus hundreds of lay Christians), that

- recent and foreseeable climate change are primarily natural, not anthropogenic;
- human contribution to recent global warming, while probably real, is neither major nor dangerous; and
- efforts to mitigate global warming by reducing carbon dioxide emissions would have more harmful than beneficial effects, especially to the world’s poor, by raising the cost of energy when abundant, affordable, reliable energy is essential to overcoming poverty.

In contrast to each of Rev. Hescoc’s assertions about Florida’s vulnerability:

1. There has, during the period of allegedly manmade global warming, been no statistically significant increase in the rate of sea level rise, which has continued to be 1 to 3 mm per year since the end of the last Ice Age.
2. There has been no increase in the intensity or frequency of extreme weather during the period. With particular relevance to Florida, it has now been over 3,200 days since the last major U.S. hurricane landfall—more than 2-1/2 years longer than the previous record since 1900—and no hurricane has struck Florida since Wilma in October, 2005. On a global basis, as Dr. Ryan N. Maue at Florida State University has shown, accumulated cyclone energy has not risen but fallen during the relevant period. Even the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change acknowledged in its 2012 SRES that it is not possible to tie global warming to increases in the frequency or intensity of extreme weather events.
3. Since there has been no increase in the rate of sea level rise over the relevant period, and since it is therefore not possible to attribute any such to anthropogenic global warming (AGW), it is mistaken to attribute either saltwater contamination of wells or loss of farmland to AGW.
4. Whatever he might have in mind in the way of “increased air pollution,” even if air pollution were increasing in Florida (and on the contrary, air pollution—ground-level ozone [smog], nitrous oxides, particulate matter, and sulfur-dioxide emissions—have been trending downward at least since 2000, according to the Department of Environmental Protection), it is not driven either by global warming or by carbon dioxide emissions.

Indeed, increased atmospheric carbon dioxide has contributed to increased plant growth worldwide, including an estimated \$3.2 trillion worth of added crop yields from 1960 through 2011 (and a projected \$9.8 trillion from now to 2050)—which makes food more abundant and affordable for the world’s (including Florida’s) poor.

In stark contradiction to computer climate model predictions, observed temperatures around the world show that there has been no global warming for at least the last 17 years and 10 months. This entails that global temperature is far less sensitive to carbon dioxide than alarmists have thought and that the models’ predictions of dangerous warming are not credible. It follows that there is no need for Florida to embrace CO2 emission-reduction policies. Further, the fact that embracing such policies would raise electricity rates, harming all Floridians but the poor most of all, entails that for the good of her people Florida should refuse to embrace such policies.

Finally, contrary to Rev. Hescoc’s couching this as a “pro-life” issue, the term “pro-life” arose in the 1970s to designate the anti-abortion movement, which is committed to preventing the intentional killing of unborn children. As a former seminary professor of Christian ethics, I take seriously the ethical importance of those two terms: *intentional* and *killing*. They signal a profound difference between abortion (or euthanasia, or infanticide, or other forms of unjustified taking of human life) and unintentional risks to health or life. For over two years EEN has been claiming first that mercury emissions and more recently that carbon dioxide emissions from power plants are a “pro-life” issue—so much so that it congratulates Members of Congress who support EPA emission restrictions as “sensitive to pro-life concerns,” even if they have 100% pro-abortion voting records, and challenges the pro-life commitments of Members who question the restrictions, even if they have 100% pro-life voting records. There is room for argument over the scientific basis for fears of harm to health or life from mercury and carbon dioxide emissions, but there is no ground to argue that these constitute the intentional killing of anyone. EEN’s campaign obscures the meaning of “pro-life,” divides the pro-life movement, and makes it more difficult to elect pro-life candidates at all levels of government. (This is not surprising, granted EEN’s having received over \$1 million from the pro-abortion Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Marisla Foundation, and [indirectly through the National Religious Partnership for the Environment] Hewlett Foundation.) We’re grateful to report that over 30 pro-life leaders signed a statement two years ago condemning EEN’s campaign (copy enclosed).

We should be good stewards of the earth. Part of this means striving always to improve the balance of benefits and costs of energy, industry, agriculture, transportation, and other activities. This is a good goal. But it must be pursued on the basis of excellent science, economics, and ethics. EEN’s misguided campaign lacks all three.

I would be glad to meet with you to present in more detail the case for a different approach to environmental issues, especially climate change, from what Rev. Hescoc offers you. Ours is an approach founded on better science, better economics, and better ethics. It is far more friendly to the pro-growth economic policies you have brought to Florida and that have helped the state outperform most of the nation in recovering from the recent financial crisis. You can reach me at 954-547-5370 (mobile) or 954-538-9502 (home office land line).

Sincerely,



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