



# FACT SHEET ON ALEC & CLIMATE CHANGE

## ALEC Model Bills Promote Uncertainty About Climate Science

ALEC's model "[Interstate Research Commission on Climatic Change Act](#)," approved by ALEC's board of directors in 1998 and reapproved by ALEC's board of directors in January 2013, states:

*"The legislature finds and declares that:*

*(A) Human activity has and will continue to alter the atmosphere of the planet.*

*(B) Such activity may lead to demonstrable changes in climate, including a warming of the planetary mean temperature.*

*(C) Such activity may lead to deleterious, neutral, or possibly beneficial climatic changes."*

*(D) Further, a great deal of scientific uncertainty surrounds the nature of these prospective changes, and the cost of regulation to inhibit such changes may lead to great economic dislocation.*

Additionally, ALEC's model "[Environmental Literacy Improvement Act](#)," approved by ALEC's board of directors in 2000 and reapproved by ALEC's board of directors in January 2013, encourages educators to teach climate change in "balanced" view. [Salon's Lindsey Abrams](#) writes that the bill "encourage[s] teachers to give climate skeptics and deniers a voice, in order to provide students with a "balanced" view of the science. In practice, of course, that doesn't turn out looking like how [a balanced debated between the 97 percent majority and the climate-denying minority should.](#)"

## ALEC Hosts Climate Deniers at Conferences

At ALEC's 2014 annual conference, legislators were given the following talking points and information from approved conference sponsors:

- *"There is no scientific consensus on the human role in climate change."*
- *"There is no need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and no point in attempting to do so."*
- *"Carbon dioxide has not caused weather to become more extreme, polar ice and sea ice to melt, or sea level rise to accelerate. These were all false alarms."*
- *The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) "is not a credible source of science or economics."*
- *"The likely benefits of manmade global warming exceed the likely costs."*

(SOURCE: Center for Media and Democracy/Forecast the Facts: [5 ways ALEC denies the facts of climate change](#))

## Statements from Current ALEC Leaders

In an [October 2014 interview with the National Journal](#), ALEC CEO Lisa Nelson said ALEC favored "free-market approaches to create renewable energy" but opposed "government mandates where the government picks winners and losers." She added, "I don't know the science on that" when asked specifically whether human emissions are the primary driver of climate change.

State Rep. Phil King (R-TX), who was elected ALEC's National Chair in 2014, [called global warming "bad science"](#) in a 2007 press release.

## ALEC's Historic Promotion of Climate Denial

In 2005, ALEC's website featured a document called "[Top 10 Myths About Global Warming](#)," authored by its then-director of ALEC's Natural Resources Task Force.

## Notable Press on ALEC and Climate Denial

"In fact, ALEC has extolled views on climate change that are far from the scientific consensus. And it regularly features speakers at its conferences who cast doubt on human contributions to climate change." [[Bloomberg](#), November 4, 2014]

"The Washington, D.C.-based group claims credit for advancing legislation that it says has undermined climate science and environmental regulation in several states since the late 1990s." [[The New York Times](#), April 4, 2011]

"ALEC's opposition to climate change policy has taken a number of forms. It's challenged further government regulations on coal-fired power plants, fought renewables, backed approval of the Keystone XL pipeline and has cast doubt on the scientific research surrounding climate change. The organization is underwritten in part by Exxon Mobil, Koch Industries, Duke Energy and Peabody Energy." [[The Washington Post](#), September 22, 2014]

"Environmental organizations, including the Sierra Club and the League of Conservation Voters, have accused ALEC of denying climate change, a charge the organization denies. Its model legislation for state lawmakers, however, runs counter to the scientific consensus on climate change, saying it remains unclear whether human emissions are changing global temperatures." [[National Journal](#), September 29, 2014]

"Internal documents from this summer's Dallas meeting of the American Legislative Exchange Council, leaked to a watchdog group, reveal several sessions casting doubt on the scientific evidence of climate change. They also reveal sessions focused on crafting policies that reduce rules for fossil fuel companies and create obstacles for the development of alternative forms of energy." [[Toronto Star](#), August 24, 2014]

"Unfortunately for ALEC, it's no longer fashionable to be a climate denier, or to promote climate denial. And it's proving to be a rather unprofitable position as well. This has put the group in the rather awkward position of having to defend its belief in climate change." [[Salon](#), September 26, 2014]

## More Resources

- Center for Media and Democracy/Forecast The Facts, [5 ways ALEC denies the facts of climate change](#)
- Climate Investigation Center, [ALEC Hates the Climate](#)
- Salon, [ALEC tries to prove it's not lying about climate change, fails miserably](#)
- National Journal, [ALEC: Global Warming Could Be Good for You](#)