

Building the Conservative Case For a Clean-Energy Future

For conservatives looking for pro-growth solutions to promote clean energy and reduce carbon pollution, the next few years are the right time to begin building a thoughtful policy and political basis for future action. We can't simply disengage, or eventually we'll find the proponents of big government again setting the agenda, and our nation's prosperity will suffer. We need policies that promote economic growth and jobs, rather than continuing to harm the economy.

Public opinion and demographics are changing – especially among young voters – and Republicans will need to respond. Polling shows that the majority of Republican voters are concerned about climate change and want government to take action. And critical voter groups, including Millennials and Hispanics, are even more concerned than the average voter. This means Republicans will need to be “for” a conservative solution and not cede the issue if we want to form winning electoral coalitions of the future.

We need to repeal the current regulations that only grow bureaucracy and harm growth, and replace them with market-based solutions. Economic growth, freedom, and small government are bedrock conservative values. Yet today, environmental regulations pick winners and losers, reduce economic growth, harm job creators and middle-class families, and stifle innovation. Republican elected officials are working to lift some of this regulatory burden. But, even after these efforts, Americans will still be living in a regulatory state, one that is still sure to grow over time. We need to repeal these harmful regulations once and for all.

Repealing regulations and replacing them with a revenue-neutral carbon tax policy is a pro-growth alternative. It would let markets (instead of government) allocate resources, stimulate innovation and capital investment, support clean energy, and effectively reduce carbon emissions. Critically, it would produce higher economic growth and more jobs than under current regulatory policies when paired with pro-growth tax reforms.