

Friday, April 3, 2009 – William Happer presentation, Amherst College

Welcome! Thanks for coming to an important speech by Dr. William Happer – an event that we, the Green Amherst Project, hope will foster discussion on campus. There is a lot of science out there. Don't take our word for it, nor Dr. Happer's – research it yourself, and arrive at your own conclusion!

We present below some **key background information** about the issue, including statements made by Dr. Happer himself.

CO2 increases global temperature. This is undisputed science. Dr. Happer said, in his speech to the Senate Environment and Public Works committee on Feb. 25, 2009,

"Atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO2) have increased from about 280 to 380 parts per million over past 100 years. The combustion of fossil fuels, coal, oil and natural gas, has contributed to the increase of CO2 in the atmosphere. And finally, increasing concentrations of CO2 in the atmosphere will cause the earth's surface to warm." ¹

He also stated,

"There is little argument in the scientific community that a **direct** effect of doubling the CO2 concentration will be a small increase of the earth's temperature." ¹

This is true, but it ignores indirect effects. The science shows that because of feedbacks, temperature rise may be as much as 6 degrees Celsius from a doubling of CO2 over 100 years. ²

Carbon dioxide levels during human civilization, and indeed back 650,000 years, **have never been as high as they are today.** ³ Dr. Happer rightly observed, "Plants, and our own primate ancestors evolved when the levels of atmospheric CO2 were about 1000 ppm." ¹ However, there are now nearly seven billion humans whose livelihoods depend on many factors that would be affected by a warming climate, including access to water, food security, coastal flooding, increased disease vector, and ecosystem changes. ² Dr. Happer betrays a deep misunderstanding of human civilization when he argues that increased CO2 concentrations would benefit humanity.

Dr. Happer is the Chairman of the Board of Directors at the George C. Marshall Institute, which has received "almost a **million dollars** over the past ten years" from **ExxonMobil.** ⁴

Despite this, Happer told the Daily Princetonian in January,

"I don't get a dime one way or another from the global warming issue," Happer noted. "I'm not on the payroll of oil companies as they [climate change scientists] are. They are funded by BP." ⁵

We can no longer afford to put off taking action on climate change. Dr. Happer noted, "what is correct in science is not determined by consensus but by experiment and observations." ¹ We now live in the laboratory of the largest experiment ever undertaken by humankind – and our best scientific evidence indicates that it is likely to end badly. Are we willing to bet the livelihoods of billions of people on the outcome?

¹ See http://bit.ly/happer_testimony for the full speech and http://bit.ly/happer_video for the video

² Nobel Prize-winning IPCC 2007 synthesis report: <http://www.ipcc.ch/ipccreports/ar4-syr.htm>

³ <http://climate.jpl.nasa.gov/evidence/>

⁴ Noted at 110:57 in the Congressional Hearing video (http://bit.ly/happer_video) and http://www.exxonmobil.com/Corporate/files/gcr_contributions_public07.pdf - \$115,000 in 2007 alone.

⁵ <http://www.dailyprincetonian.com/2009/01/12/22506/>