

THE GLOBAL CLIMATE COALITION:  
*Big Business Funds Climate Change Denial and Regulatory Delay*

---



As corporations are increasingly being held accountable for deception of shareholders and the public on climate risk, as authors and journalists explore this history, and as lawmakers investigate it, Climate Investigations Center embarked on a year-long investigation of the Global Climate Coalition (GCC), arguably the most impactful industry group ever to campaign against climate change regulation and science.

The United States woke up to climate change in 1988 after extreme weather caused [drought across half the country](#) and newsworthy [Senate hearings on the science](#) stressed urgent action. In 1989, the Global Climate Coalition, the first industry organization to challenge government action on climate, was launched from the offices of the National Association of Manufacturers, with leadership dominated by coal-vested electric utility interests, fossil fuel companies (oil, coal) and their trade associations, and heavy manufacturing (i.e. steel, aluminum, railroads, and automobiles). The GCC was corporate America's primary vehicle of climate change science denial and regulatory delay during its existence until 2002.

Now, nearly two decades after the group disbanded, the Climate Investigations Center has collected the most comprehensive collection of GCC documents, and made them publicly available in its archival portal, [Climate Files](#).

Curated from research by advocates and journalists, and from private archives, litigation, FOIA requests, and IRS filings, this collection reveals the broad industry coalition that led, staffed, and coordinated the GCC's efforts. The documents show GCC's work to [carefully pick apart established climate science](#), [emphasize uncertainty](#), and [advocate for regulatory inaction](#) to the public, media, lawmakers, and government representatives.

---

## KEY FINDINGS

### I. **Oil, Utilities, and Coal at Helm of GCC and its Denial Committee, STAC**

- A. From GCC's founding until its dissolution, the industries with the most to lose in a carbon-constrained future were central components to the GCC's strategy and output.

- B. From the outset, the corporate interests that controlled the central components of the GCC were fossil fuel producers, including coal mining interests and oil companies, and fossil fuel dependent industries, including coal-burning utilities, railroads who moved coal, automobiles, and chemical companies. When the GCC became a standalone non-profit organization in 1995, independent from the National Association of Manufacturers, the membership grew, adding at least 8 new utilities and 7 new oil and coal corporations as members. At the same time, the budget tripled, with tax documents showing three million dollars in corporate and trade association dues in tax years 1996 and 1997, compared to one million dollars in dues from the years 1994 and 1995.
- C. Revealed in seven years of data uncovered in our collection, the GCC was staffed primarily by utility, coal, and oil company employees - fifty-seven percent of the coalition's membership. As shown below, coal, oil, and gas interests also dominated the GCC's Board, the highest level of membership available within the GCC, and the GCC committee largely responsible for the creation of GCC's climate science denial.
- D. In the late 1990s, division between GCC's corporate membership shows GCC's hardline approach to climate change science resulted in losing member dues and social license.

## II. **GCC's Priority: Co-opting Science Within the International Climate Negotiation Process**

- A. Monitoring and analyzing the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) negotiations was the GCC's primary goal, with documents showing GCC's "IPCC Tracker Budget" receiving an average of two-and-a-half times more annual funding than any other line-item in the budget, topping \$78,000 in 1996. These funds were used for corporate scientists to attend IPCC meetings, GCC's participation in the IPCC process, and to draft reports synthesizing IPCC findings.
- B. The GCC and its member companies sent large delegations to IPCC meetings, some registered with the UN as "Global Climate Coalition" representatives, while other corporate representatives would register with different business-friendly NGOs - forming one coordinated industry coalition bearing many different names. At the IPCC's Second Conference of the Parties in 1996, only twenty-eight of the forty-five representatives with ties to the GCC disclosed that relationship. The number of representatives associated with the GCC present at COP-2 was more than two times the typical COP delegation from any one developing country (usually ranging from one to twenty members).
- C. The GCC engaged with the IPCC in bad faith; GCC corporate representatives registered with different organizations to attend the IPCC meeting, but would report back to the GCC their efforts, emphasizing IPCC findings that validated the interests of their member corporations and omitting those that did not. Simultaneously, demonstrated in previously

unreleased documents, the GCC coordinated an attack on the IPCC process - erroneously targeting scientist Ben Santer through direct communications and public-facing editorials.

### III. **The Voice of Industry: GCC Doesn't Concede Full Truth on Science**

- A. The GCC's rhetoric evolved over time, its early years producing some of its most strident public climate change denial. During this time, examples of the coalition denying anthropogenic climate change and highlighting fringe contrarian theories were commonplace. Despite internal discussions about what they could and couldn't factually assert, along with small adjustments to the GCC's talking points, the group continued to proffer doubt and uncertainty around climate science and refer to the same, small group of climate deniers until the group disbanded.
- B. GCC's *Science and Technology Assessment Committee* (STAC) was one of many Committee's within the GCC, and the place where science was discussed most intensively. The STAC also shaped the GCC's carefully worded, strategic denial - shaping the group's climate positions, emphasizing natural climate variability, questioning the reliability of climate modeling, and diminishing humanity's role in greenhouse gas emissions.
- C. Despite internal documents and drafts showing the GCC internally acknowledging the legitimacy of anthropogenic climate change while debunking prevailing "contrarian theories" in 1995, the GCC never publicly disclosed their full understanding of climate change science. Instead, it would continue to publicly emphasize factors other than human greenhouse gas emissions, touting the same "contrarian theories" they had internally debated and debunked, as late as 1999.

### IV. **U.S. Policymakers Want Input: GCC Sends Talking Points, Wish Lists, and Aggressive Critiques of the Kyoto Protocol**

- A. The GCC influenced international negotiations through engagement with the United States government delegation involved in the negotiations themselves. From just 1996 to 1997, documents show the GCC met with high-ranking government officials on at least ten occasions, supplying the State Department with talking points and GCC-written reports that perpetuated denial and regulatory delay. In those meetings, "[t]he GCC position was one of no need for rushing into any controls [of greenhouse gases]."
- B. The GCC continued to voice its opinion to government officials until at least 2001, when a State Department briefing scripts an Undersecretary to tell the GCC that, "POTUS rejected Kyoto, in part, based on input from you."

## V. GCC Astrourfing: Kochs, ExxonMobil, and Others Support Kyoto Opposition

- A. In 1996, the GCC wanted to expand its reach, announcing a new *State and Local Committee* to engage in climate change dialogue on the ground across the United States.
- B. Documents show this plan was to be implemented with the help of organizations in the now infamous Koch network, front groups and organizations created or supported by GCC industry-members like ExxonMobil, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, and CSX Corporation.

## VI. GCC Denial of Climate Impacts on Human Health

- A. As early as 1994, the GCC questioned if modeling was able to “quantify the cost of climate change with respect to ... health” in an “Issues and Options: Potential Global Climate Change” report. In a 1995 GCC bulletin, the Coalition countered Harvard School of Public Health’s Dr. Paul Epstein, who contended that more tropical weather from global warming would lead to an increase of tropical disease. Then, in a 1996 strategy memo to the GCC Board of Directors, the GCC flagged that, “[f]or the first time, the Administration is likely to play the health card - an unfounded argument that climate change will cause an increase in diseases and will otherwise affect the health of US citizens.”
- B. GCC’s STAC received internal briefings from Exxon in 1996 outlining a strategy to foster debate and question findings that linked human health impacts to climate change. The GCC followed Exxon’s advice, releasing its own statements marking computer modeling as insufficient to show a causal connection between adverse impacts on human health and climate change.
- C. In 1997, the GCC quietly funded an American Council on Science and Health (ACSH) report on human health and climate. The final ACSH report was never circulated among the STAC committee from the documents we have here. However, in 1997, ACSH did publish a report on the subject titled “Global Climate Change and Human Health” and despite sharing the same subject as the STAC grant, the report disclosed no funding or support from the GCC or any other corporate entities. The report held that sustained fossil fuel consumption was “fundamental to the well-being of the human population,” thus, ACSH argued, the use of these fuels should not be curtailed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

---

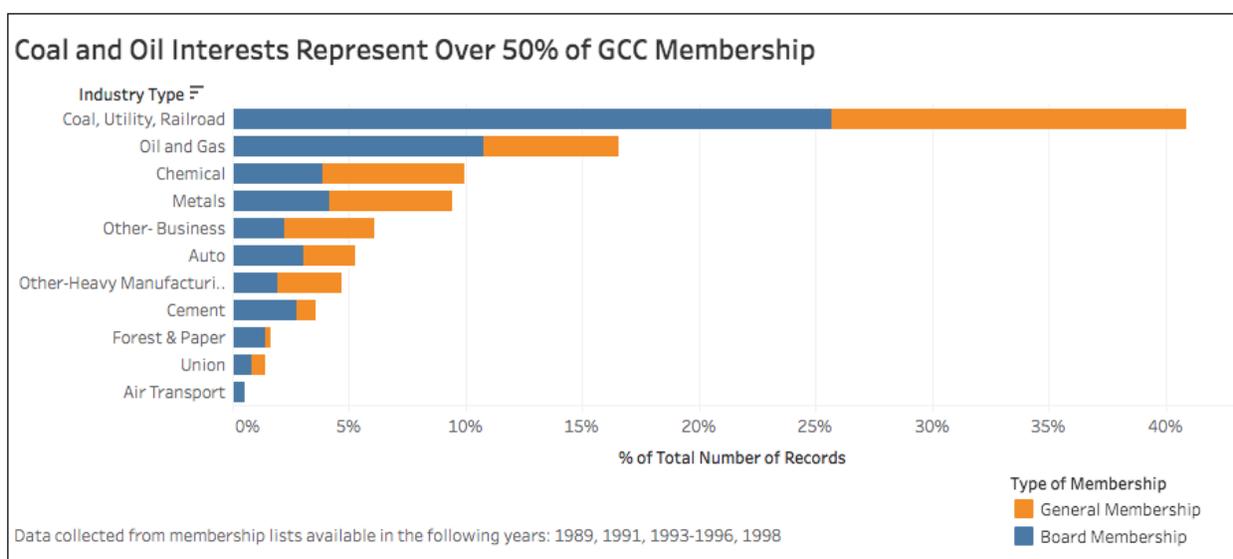
## FULL COLLECTION SUMMARY

### I. **Oil, Utilities, and Coal at Helm of GCC and its Denial Committee, STAC**

Throughout the GCC’s existence, the industries with the most to lose in a carbon-constrained future were ringleaders in the GCC and central in informing their denial and delay strategy. From

GCC's founding until it was disbanded, coal-burning electric utilities, oil majors and refiners, and other fossil fuel producers like coal mining companies, were central to the GCC's strategy and output. Coal interests, oil and gas corporations, and their respective trade associations, represented fifty-seven percent of the GCC's membership over seven years of data uncovered in our documents (graph on next page). Coal, oil, and gas interests also dominated the GCC's Board, the highest level of membership available within the GCC.

At its formation, the GCC was [housed within](#) the [National Association of Manufacturers](#) (NAM), a group with a [long history](#) of advocating for the [oil industry](#) and [utilities](#). The small GCC team was [organized](#) with Phillips Petroleum's Tom Lambrix as Chairman, Southern Company's J. Minter as government liaison, and a support staffer from NAM.



The GCC's [founding members](#) overwhelmingly consisted of fossil fuel producers and heavy users: oil majors [Shell](#), [Texaco](#) (now [a part of Chevron](#)), [Amoco](#) (now [a part of BP](#)); oil refiner and retailers [ARCO](#) (now [a subsidiary of Marathon Petroleum](#)) and [Phillips Petroleum](#) (now [a part of ConocoPhillips](#)); coal miners [BHP - Utah International](#) and [Peabody](#); and utilities [Southern Company](#), [American Electric Power](#) and [Pacific Gas and Electric](#). The oil, coal, and utility contingent was also represented by founding member trade associations ([American Petroleum Institute](#), [National Coal Association](#), and [Edison Electric Institute](#) (EEI) respectively).

The GCC became an independent organization in [1992](#). It announced [a new executive director, John Shlaes](#), with experience at utility trade EEI. While Shlaes worked at EEI, it was later revealed, the group implemented its [1991 "Information Council on the Environment" denial campaign](#).

With a new leader, a [new dues structure](#), and boasting the addition of at least [8 utilities](#) and [7 oil and coal corporations](#) as [members](#), the GCC [officially filed](#) for 501c(6) tax-exempt status. The change in designation was helpful for the GCC; records reflect three million dollars in corporate and trade association dues in tax years [1996](#) and [1997](#), compared to one million dollars in dues from [July 1994 to December 1995](#). [American Petroleum Institute's](#) (API) William O'Keefe would assume [chairmanship of GCC's Operating Committee](#) in 1994, eventually assuming Shlaes' [Executive Director position](#).

### *STAC Staffed by utility, coal, and oil interests*

Litigation documents show GCC's STAC leadership was staffed by oil and coal-vested utility interests. Mobil Oil Corporation's Lenny Bernstein, for instance, [shared his seat as chair person](#) with Porter Wolmerdorff, who represented the utility Illinois Power (now [Ameren](#)), which [relied heavily on coal](#) and [struggled with Clean Air Act compliance](#). Womeldorff was the STAC member to identify "a list of topics which were sources of the uncertainty in the scientific assessment of climate change," coordinating an effort to "put together write-ups on these topics." Womeldorff highlighted climate models, sea level rise, solar variability, carbon dioxide, and temperature record/measurement as critical issue areas - the next five years the GCC focused on those exact issues.

Coal mining companies and coal-fired utilities were one of the most well represented interest groups in STAC. Powerful utility industry EEI, for instance, had more than their former staffer Shlaes running the GCC, but also placed [John Kinsman](#) amongst STAC's members. Kinsman was responsible for keeping STAC [abreast of IPCC findings](#) and [scrutinizing its science](#). He also was responsible for shaping the [internal draft climate change primer](#) with Lenny Bernstein, discussed below, that both acknowledged the reality of anthropogenic climate change and debunked "contrarian theories" that supported natural climate variability. The primer in this form was never published publicly.

Another coal interest group, the [Western Fuels Association](#), became a board member of GCC and committee member to STAC at the same time they were [launching their own denial campaign, "the Greening Earth Society."](#) The WFA's [Ned Leonard](#) served on STAC. Leonard eventually went on to work with EEI and the [American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity](#). In addition to WFA, The Electric Power Research Institute, the [National Coal Association](#) and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, all trade associations of utilities and coal interests, contributed four representatives to STAC's efforts.

Alongside trade associations, member corporations reliant on coal were active members of STAC as well. Illinois Power Company and Union Electric (both entities now a part of [Ameren](#)

[Corporation](#)) seemed to have the greatest individual control, occupying the Co-Chair position, plus two additional support staff serving on STAC.

Other coal-reliant utilities and their representatives that were members of STAC in 1997:

- [Robert Gehri \(Southern Company\)](#)
- Eric Kuhn ([Cinergy Services](#))
- John McManus ([American Electric Power Corp.](#))
- Mike Stroben ([Duke Energy](#))
- Tim Banfield and Fred Starheim ([Allegheny Power](#) and [Ohio Edison Company](#) respectively - [FirstEnergy Corp.](#) was formed in 1997 by a merger of Ohio Edison and Centerior Energy, Allegheny was acquired by FirstEnergy in 2011)

Oil companies and their trade associations were heavily represented within STAC as well. Individual corporations Mobil, Exxon, Texaco (now [a part of Chevron](#)), and ARCO contributed five staffers to STAC. Like coal and utilities, oil interests concentrated their STAC support through their principal trade association, API, which committed four staff members to STAC. One of API's STAC members was Mitchell Baer, who API hired away from the American Meteorological Society after [Baer published work](#) expressing skepticism toward the "enhanced greenhouse effect" as climate change was often referred to in the 1980s and early 90s.

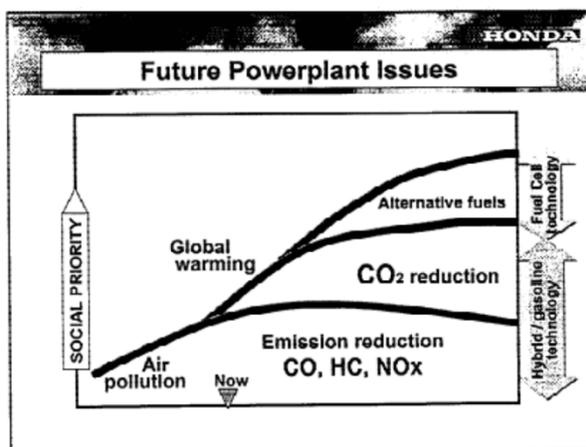
Like with coal and utilities, the staff representing oil industries was responsible for accomplishing STAC's goals. API's Howard Feldman [distributed and prepared STAC meeting minutes](#); API's Tom Kirlin [coordinated the development](#) of "Climate Change Assertions and Facts" report; Mobil co-chaired the committee; and Exxon presented repeatedly on human health impacts from climate change, informing later GCC denial materials.

The recurring STAC meetings themselves were hosted by the same entities as well, rotating from the D.C. offices of the [National Mining Association](#), [Edison Electric Institute](#), [National Rural Electric Cooperative Association](#), and [Southern Company](#).

### Corporate divide/departures

As consensus around climate change grew, so did rifts between GCC's industry members. The nine corporations that departed GCC from 1996 to 2000 included two automakers, one chemical manufacturer, one utility, and five oil companies. BP started the exodus in 1996, [stating that](#) "the time to consider the policy dimensions of climate change is not when the link between greenhouse gases and climate change is conclusively proven, but when the possibility cannot be discounted and is taken seriously by the society of which we are part. We in BP have reached that point."

The documents in our collection reflect the internal tension caused by BP's departure - fear that the GCC was receiving too much [negative publicity](#) and an interest to distance themselves from anti-Kyoto Protocol sentiments. Documents show the Association of International Automobile Manufacturers' (AIAM) [in internal discussions](#) about leaving the GCC, stating, "[t]he message of the GCC is there is no scientific basis for global warming ... AIAM Government Relations, Technical, and Manufacturing Operations Committees are considering whether to join the [International Climate Change Partnership](#) rather than continuing with the GCC." Based on a [1998 GCC membership document](#) distributed at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) Fourth Conference of the Parties, it appears that AIAM did leave the GCC soon after their internal discussion.



Another GCC STAC member was [Ford Motor Company](#). In Ford's [2001 Climate Report](#), the section, "Changing Our Approach to a Changing Climate," recounted the early 1990's when, "[a]long with energy companies, automakers and others, we questioned the science of climate change." This period, of course, was when Ford was affiliated with the Global Climate Coalition. Ford then highlighted the late 1990's as the period when "we started listening," citing scientific consensus as the reason for it to "shift significantly" its "stance on climate change." And Ford did, leaving the GCC in [1999](#). The GCC [responded](#) to Ford, remaining steadfast to its core mission, claiming that Ford's departure was "driven by a campaign of misinformation by fringe environmental groups."

## II. GCC's Priority: Co-opting Science Within the International Climate Negotiation Process

After the 1992 Earth Summit, the GCC's principal objective was to slow down the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). New GCC documents reveal how the coalition took advantage of their seat at the table during the UNFCCC process and sought to influence Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports. The GCC infiltrated the process and informed industry allies about the latest scientific findings, the same information they used to craft the next volley of denial. A previously unknown "[IPCC Tracker budget](#)" garnered [30 percent of total committee expenditures](#), two-and-a-half times larger than the average GCC committee's funds, during 1994, 1995, and 1996 (the only tax records we have acquired thus far).

The GCC used these funds to [aggressively](#) track and attack the IPCC, its [peer review process](#), and its [underlying models](#). While critical of its goals, the GCC remained [keen on UNFCCC and IPCC developments](#), sending delegations of [more than 20 people](#) to the COP meetings, hiring [independent contractors](#) to listen in their stead, and distributing their staff and members to other business-friendly NGOs - forming one coordinated coalition bearing many different names.

For instance, at the Second Conference of Parties (COP-2) in 1996, the GCC [sent twenty-eight delegates](#), representing ten member companies from the automotive, utility, manufacturing, petroleum, and mining industries. At the same COP, seventeen representatives of [GCC member companies](#) like Dow Chemical, BP, and [Duke Power](#) (now Duke Energy) participated in the COP wearing badge credentials of eight additional organizations. Further, none of the three GCC STAC members attending COP-2 disclosed their GCC affiliation, opting instead to wear badges of The Climate Council or the Organisation Internationale des Constructeurs D'Automobiles, for instance. That totals forty-five representatives with ties to GCC present at COP-2, more than two times [the typical COP delegation](#) from any one developing country (usually ranging from one to twenty members).

After COP-2, documents show the same representatives who registered with different organizations [regrouping](#), [sharing notes](#), [determining their impact](#), [previewing unreleased documents](#), and drafting language for [their own organizations](#) and [to submit as input to the IPCC](#).

The GCC engaged with the IPCC in bad faith, highlighting findings that validated the positions and interests of their member corporations and omitting those that did not. At the same IPCC Mexico meeting where GCC language was [officially adopted](#) in an IPCC Technical Paper, a [draft STAC memo](#) shows the GCC targeting language for future IPCC reports; in the memo, handwritten notes suggested that the [“high degree of \[political\] inequity”](#) in addressing climate change for vulnerable regions of the world, “should be deleted.”

Additionally, the GCC and allies launched a sustained campaign against the IPCC *Summary for Policymakers* document that accompanies each IPCC report. An [internal STAC document](#) explains, “the 'Peer Review' statement helps makes [sic] the case for quoting from the underlying [IPCC] documents, *which reflect the end result of a rigorous peer review* versus the Summaries for Policymakers which reflect the end result of a government negotiation.” (emphasis added).

Simultaneously, demonstrated in previously unreleased documents, the GCC coordinated an aggressive attack on the IPCC process - erroneously targeting scientist Ben Santer through direct communications and public-facing editorials. The GCC widely distributed a memo to media outlets titled, [“The IPCC: Institutionalized ‘Scientific Cleansing.’”](#) The memo [argued](#) that edits

were made, “rais[ing] very serious questions about whether the IPCC has compromised, or even lost, its scientific integrity.”

Following the distribution of the GCC’s memo, *Energy Daily*, the *Washington Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal* [amplified the GCC’s message](#). Coal-funded GCC member Western Fuels Association also cited the memo in “[Bait and Switch? IPCC pares down the consensus](#).” The GCC’s rhetoric [gained mainstream coverage](#), in their own words, “[o]n at least the issue that has received more media and public attention than any other, [IPCC’s] published report on the science of potential global climate change defies *both the letter and the spirit* of the IPCC’s Rules governing its reports.” The GCC threatened that if the IPCC didn’t re-publish the report, “IPCC’s credibility will have been lost.”

In response, Santer and other prominent scientists penned open letters and op-eds rebutting the GCC’s allegations. The American Meteorological Society (AMS), for instance, [wrote](#) “to support [Santer] and the other scientists who participated in the preparation of the recent IPCC report.” [AMS warned](#) of a, “concerted and systematic effort by some individuals to undermine and discredit the scientific process,” engaging in an opinion-based media campaign - conduct that has, “no place in the scientific debate about issues related to global climate change.”

In a [separate letter](#), Chairman of the IPCC Bert Bolin also supported Santer unwaveringly. Identifying GCC’s Executive Director [John Shlaes](#) and Climate Council’s [Don Pearlman](#) as those “who have initiated these attacks on the IPCC,” [Bolin rebuked the GCC](#) and its allied dissidents:

“I wish to state very clearly that the allegations are completely unjustified.”

- Bert Bolin, IPCC Chairman

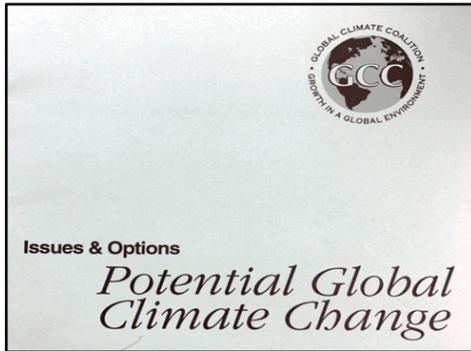
### III. The Voice of Industry: GCC Doesn’t Concede Full Truth on Science

#### *Early Climate Denial*

The GCC’s rhetoric on climate science evolved over time, its early years dominated by strident climate change denial. During this time, examples of the Coalition denying [anthropogenic climate change](#) and highlighting fringe [contrarian theories](#) were commonplace.

In one 1994 volume of its [Climate Watch Bulletin](#), the Coalition highlighted “new scientific evidence,” which suggested that fossil fuels may help maintain “an essential atmospheric balance” and “that **cutbacks in fossil fuel use may actually enhance the greenhouse effect.**” (emphasis added).

In two other publications that same year, the GCC [stated that](#), “[t]here is **no evidence of a warming trend that can be traced to man-made emissions**” and [claimed](#) that while the



“popular press” seemed concerned about “the consequences of a potential man-made warming of the Earth's atmosphere during the next 100 years, **there remains no scientific evidence that such a dangerous warming will actually occur.**” (emphasis added).

The GCC [highlighted work](#) by a relatively small group of climate denier scientists and claimed that their “arguments have received far less attention than they deserve.” These spokespeople, often with academic credentials, put forward alternative explanations for the warming trend such as changes in the Sun’s intensity, they questioned computer modeling, and attacked the temperature data record from surface stations and satellites. These specific arguments and individuals would be continually cited in [GCC-commissioned reports](#) and other publications by the organization.

Throughout our collection, the GCC consistently relied on the same, small group of climate change deniers including [Richard Lindzen](#), [Robert Balling](#), [Willie Soon's mentor Sallie Baliunas](#), [Patrick Michaels](#), [John Christy](#), [Robert Jastrow](#), [Frederick Seitz](#), and [Roy Spencer](#). This reliance continued into the late 1990s and early 2000s, even as the GCC’s defiance of the scientific consensus became [more subtle](#).

Some of the GCC’s founding members and board of directors internally acknowledged anthropogenic climate change caused primarily by the burning of fossil fuels years before the GCC’s formation. Playing key roles in the formation and dissemination of the organization’s denial rhetoric, reports and remarks from GCC members [Exxon](#), [Shell](#), [Edison Electric Institute](#) (EEI), [Electric Power Research Institute](#) (EPRI), [Ford](#), [Mobil](#), and [American Petroleum Institute](#) (API), were at odds with the GCC’s materials.

#### *Science and Technology Assessment Committee*

Released in full for the first time, a series of documents produced during litigation show the GCC’s Science and Technology Assessment Committee (STAC) as the origin point of the organization’s carefully worded, strategic denial.

STAC was at the center of shaping the GCC’s climate positions, emphasizing natural climate variabilities, questioning the reliability of climate modeling, and diminishing the importance of humanity’s role in greenhouse gas emissions. However, in a 1995 internal draft version of a GCC [“primer on climate change”](#), written in response to the IPCC 2nd Assessment, Mobil

Corporation's staff scientist [Lenny Bernstein](#) (a STAC [Co-Chair](#)) accepted anthropogenic climate change and debunked each of the prevailing "contrarian theories." The "contrarian theories" section of the draft primer was [subsequently](#) removed by the Committee before publication. The [draft memo that was approved by STAC](#), in contrast to Bernstein's draft, concluded, "claims that human activities have already created a significant impact on climate, seem unsubstantiated given the many limitations and uncertainties in the studies used to support those claims."

The GCC would continue to publicly emphasize [natural climate variability over anthropogenic climate change](#) from the time the draft primer was circulated to STAC [until at least 1999](#). The same month that Bernstein deemed the scientists rebutting the prevailing scientific consensus research as "[not convincing](#)," the GCC's [Climate Watch Bulletin](#) cited some of those same scientists and [stated](#) that "no credible scientific evidence exists," which proved climatic changes "have been caused by human activity." Several months later, the GCC released an [overview of its work](#), which argued that climate change *was* "part of a natural warming trend." A separate, public-facing "Climate Change Primer" [was published around 1998](#), emphasizing that greenhouse gases have both manmade and natural sources.

#### **IV. U.S. Policymakers Want Input: GCC Sends Talking Points, Wish Lists, and Aggressive Critiques of the Kyoto Protocol**

The GCC also influenced international negotiations through consistent engagement with the United States government dignitaries and officials directly involved in the UNFCCC and IPCC processes. In addition to the [sixty-three million dollars](#) contributed to U.S. Congresspeople on behalf of GCC members from 1989 to 1999, documents revealed during litigation and through public record requests demonstrate the GCC targeted all aspects of U.S. government, with a special attention to the State Department when mitigatory action at the UNFCCC seemed to grow more imminent (the State Department led the U.S. Delegation to UNFCCC meetings). The GCC leveraged their relationships, effectively communicating talking points, position statements, key policy wishes, and STAC-composed reports and essays throughout that period.

The GCC lobbied government officials to combat mandatory emissions reductions, carbon trading regimes, and the scientific consensus on anthropogenic climate change. They met with the [Council on Environmental Quality](#), [State Department](#), [members of Congress](#), [President Clinton](#) and other [Administration staff](#) on at least ten occasions from 1996 to 1997. During that period, the State Department [asked the GCC for input](#) "on a number of issues ... discussed at the next round of UN climate change meetings in July [1996]." The GCC STAC [supplied a paper](#) questioning the integrity of IPCC scientist Ben Santer, and the Second Assessment Report for not including enough discussion of "natural variability" or "natural forces." The paper also criticized the use of the phrase, "discernible human influence" which was much stronger language than in

the IPCC First Assessment Report. In at least [two other meetings](#) with the State Department, "[t]he GCC position was one of no need for rushing into any controls," a message of delay that they aggressively repeated and defended in reports, monthly bulletins, and other materials aimed at influencing public opinion.

The GCC continued to voice its opinion to government officials [until at least 2001](#), when a State Department briefing instructs Under Secretary Dobriansky to [tell the GCC](#), that the "POTUS rejected Kyoto, in part, based on input from you."

## V. GCC Astrourfing: Kochs, ExxonMobil, and Others Support Kyoto Opposition

In 1996, the prospect of a mandatory treaty was looming and the GCC wanted to expand its reach, engaging more purposefully in the climate change dialogue on the ground in the U.S. In a newly published GCC Board of Directors memo, "[The Coalition's Strategy in 1997](#)," outlined the GCC's targeted plan and new *State and Local Committee*. The memo stated the following:

"GCC strategy must include broad based grassroots effort designed to present a balanced view on the climate issue an the state and local levels. The Coalition has formed a new State and Local Committee to monitor activities now occurring in individual states, to coordinate the state/local activities of all GCC committees, and to serve as a liaison with other business and public interest groups with similar views on climate change."

One year later, in a 1997 *Mother Jones* article titled "[Astroturf Troopers](#)," another [internal memo](#) was revealed showing the plan coming to fruition. In [conjunction](#) with an [advertising campaign](#), the GCC's Susan Moya penned a memo briefing its membership about a planned "Strike for Liberty"

Display Ad 31 -- No Title  
New York Times ; Nov 20, 1997; pg. B7



**The Only Thing  
This Treaty Cools Down Is  
America's Economy.**

Liberty" Kyoto Protocol protest, promising their "stateside" spokespeople daily updates from the negotiations, and attaching a list of media contacts and "In the States - Grassroots" allies.

Those contacts were comprised of several organizations from the now infamous Koch

network, [front groups](#) and organizations created and funded by industry members of the GCC, and organizations from the pro-property rights, anti-regulatory [“Wise Use” movement](#). The following list demonstrates those connections:

- Three GCC grassroots contacts were members of the Texas [Citizens for a Sound Economy](#) (CSE). CSE was a conservative political group [established](#) by [Charles](#) and [David Koch](#) of [Koch Industries](#). It received [millions](#) in funding from Charles and his network. In 2004, CSE split into [Americans for Prosperity](#) (AfP) and [FreedomWorks](#);
- [Frontiers of Freedom Institute](#) (FoF), another “grassroots” ally, was also a recipient of funds from the [Charles Koch Foundation](#). FoF received [more than one million dollars](#) in contributions from GCC Member ExxonMobil;
- [Consumers for Vehicle Choice](#) (CVC), a [now-defunct automobile industry advocacy group](#) established by [GCC member](#), the [Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers](#) (AAM), availed eight of its employees to GCC’s grassroots effort. AAM simultaneously ran attack ads, [criticizing the Kyoto Protocol](#). AAM CVC was funded through a \$500,000 grant to veteran science denial PR firm [E. Bruce Harrison](#) & Cowas. E. Bruce Harrison [also advised the GCC](#);
- Coal and rail interests were represented by the coal and utility front group, [The Center for Energy and Economic Development](#) (CEED). CEED’s [founding president](#), John Snow, worked for the CSX Corporation, an active member of the GCC. Many utility and coal mining members of CEED were also members of the GCC. In 2008, CEED and another front group, Americans for Balanced Energy Choices, [consolidated](#) to become the [American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity](#) which exists to this day.

## VI. GCC Denial of Climate Impacts on Human Health

This document collection provides new insight into the GCC’s denial efforts surrounding the growing consensus that climate change impacts would have a negative effect on human health. As early as [1994](#), the GCC questioned if modeling was able to “quantify the cost of climate change with respect to ... health.” In [1995](#), the GCC countered Dr. Paul Epstein of the Harvard School of Public Health, who contended that more tropical weather from global warming would lead to more tropical disease. Then, in a [1996 strategy memo](#) to the GCC Board of Directors (BoD), the GCC flagged that, “[f]or the first time, the Administration is likely to play the health card - an unfounded argument that climate change will cause an increase in diseases and will otherwise affect the health of US citizens.”

Soon after the BoD memo, Exxon’s [Barry Friedlander](#) and Dennis Devlin presented a white paper and follow-up slide deck to STAC on, "what's known about the relationship between climate change and risks to human health, to address: diseases affected by temperature, including

strengths, weaknesses and data gaps." [Devlin's presentation](#) recommended identifying "scientific leaders with 'diverse' views" and critiquing "predictive models" to foster debate. Emphasizing "key knowledge gaps," the presentation eschewed evidence that changes in global temperature could negatively impact natural regulatory systems, or make epidemics, like malaria, more likely. The final bullet concluded with a recommendation: "Promote Concept of Relative Risk ... Significance of Climate Impacts vs. Other Disease Factors."

These presentations [inspired STAC](#) to [search for](#) someone with, "appropriate credentials to be a spokesman for the issue ... someone with a medical degree and some reputation," they wrote. Seemingly unable to find a doctor, STAC eventually contacted two think tanks to generate opinions consistent with their members'. STAC Co-Chair Lenny Bernstein of Mobil recommended the GCC reach out to corporate-supported think tanks, the [American Council of Science and Health](#) (ACSH) and Institute for Evaluating Health Risks (IEHR), both of which were being funded by Mobil Foundation at the time. While [members](#) of the IEHR management committee overlapped with the GCC's (i.e. Exxon and Dow Chemical), ACSH won the STAC contract to write a study countering the causal relationship between climate and human health.

The GCC eventually received [editorial discretion over the final copy](#) of the ACSH paper it funded, but the final product was never explicitly distributed in the documents we have available. However, in 1997, ACSH published "[Global climate change and human health](#)" which matched the subject and description of the [STAC grant](#). However, the report disclosed no funding or support from the GCC or any other corporate entity or representative. The ACSH report stressed that any correlation between climate change and human health was "hypothetical," estimated, or underdeveloped. The report also held that sustaining fossil fuel consumption would be better for human health than any reduction in fossil fuel consumption to combat theoretical climate change.

As Exxon scientist Devlin suggested, the GCC targeted climate science modeling, emphasized health problems unrelated to climate, and highlighted dissenting opinions that validated the GCC's stance in that document. Two months after Devlin's presentation, the GCC wrote in a [position statement](#), "[c]oncerns that climate change might be the cause of various health problems rests on a number of unproved assumptions." In conclusion, the document labeled other issues more-deserving of regulatory attention, "[climate change is a marginal factor in the broad range of public policy options that should be examined in addressing health concerns around the globe](#)." The GCC republished that position statement in [1997](#).

---