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COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

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April 11, 2017

Dear Chairman Smith:

At the House Science, Space, and Technology hearing titled *Climate Science: Assumptions, Policy, Implications, and Scientific Method* on March 29, 2017, a number of false or misleading statements were made. Since I have been a member of the House Science Committee, I have been increasingly concerned by sweeping statements and allegations not supported by accepted science or fact made by Majority Members and witnesses. It is hard not to conclude that these misleading statements are an attempt to attack the scientific consensus of climate change and undermine climate science.

As part of the hearing record, I am enclosing a number of comments submitted to my office from several scientists and experts that attempt to correct the record. A sampling of these "fact checks" follows:

Claim: On page 11 of Dr. John Christy's written testimony he states, "Consensus, however, is a political notion, not a scientific notion."

Fact: Numerous peer-reviewed studies show that climate experts are in almost unanimous agreement that humans are the dominant cause of modern climate change. The most recent review (Cook et al., 2016) of these various studies found: "We examine the available studies and conclude that the finding of 97% consensus in published climate research is robust and consistent with other surveys of climate scientists and peer-reviewed studies."
http://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/11/4/048002

- Submitted by Scott A Mandia, Asst. Chair & Professor of Physical Sciences, Suffolk County Community College, American Geophysical Union Fellow and recipient of the 2014 American Geophysical Union Ambassador Award

Claim: "That is not known as an objective writer or magazine." – Chairman Lamar Smith, referring to the journal of Science.

Fact: As *Science* is one of the oldest and most widely-respected scientific publications in the world, scientists and journalists (and audible members of the hearing's viewing gallery) were shocked by Smith's allegation that the outlet, or its writers, were not objective. Originally founded with financial help from Alexander Graham Bell, the periodical has been in continuous publication since 9 February 1883, as discussed in a history of its origins.

Among the numerous monumentally significant papers published in the journal are Albert Einstein's formulation of gravitational lensing, the complete map of the entire human genome, the first evidence of a link between HIV and AIDS, and numerous Nobel Prize winning discoveries. Based on a combination of factors (including the number of times its papers are cited), *Science* is consistently ranked (including by the NIH, an organization over which Smith's committee has jurisdiction) as being among highest-impact journals in all of science.

- Snopes, *Chair of House Science Committee Says the Journal 'Science' Is Not Objective,* March 29, 2017, by Alex Kasprak

Claim: Professor Curry's claim that climate scientists ignore or underplay key uncertainties.

Fact: This claim is simply untrue. Let me give you an example from climate change detection and attribution ("D&A") research. In D&A studies, we routinely consider uncertainties in computer model estimates of the climate change "signal" (the climate response to changes in external factors, such as human-caused changes in greenhouse gases) and to uncertainties in estimates of the "noise" of natural climate variability. We routinely consider uncertainties in the climate observations themselves. We routinely examine whether our ability to identify human-caused "fingerprints" is sensitive to such model and data uncertainties, or is affected by the statistical choices we make in comparing simulations and observations. A paper published in PNAS, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, in 2009 provides one of many possible examples of how scientists address such uncertainties in a thorough and responsible way.

- Submitted by Benjamin D. Santer, Ph.D., Atmospheric Scientist in the Program for Climate Model Diagnosis and Intercomparison, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), Livermore, California

Sincerely,

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress