SPECIAL EDITION

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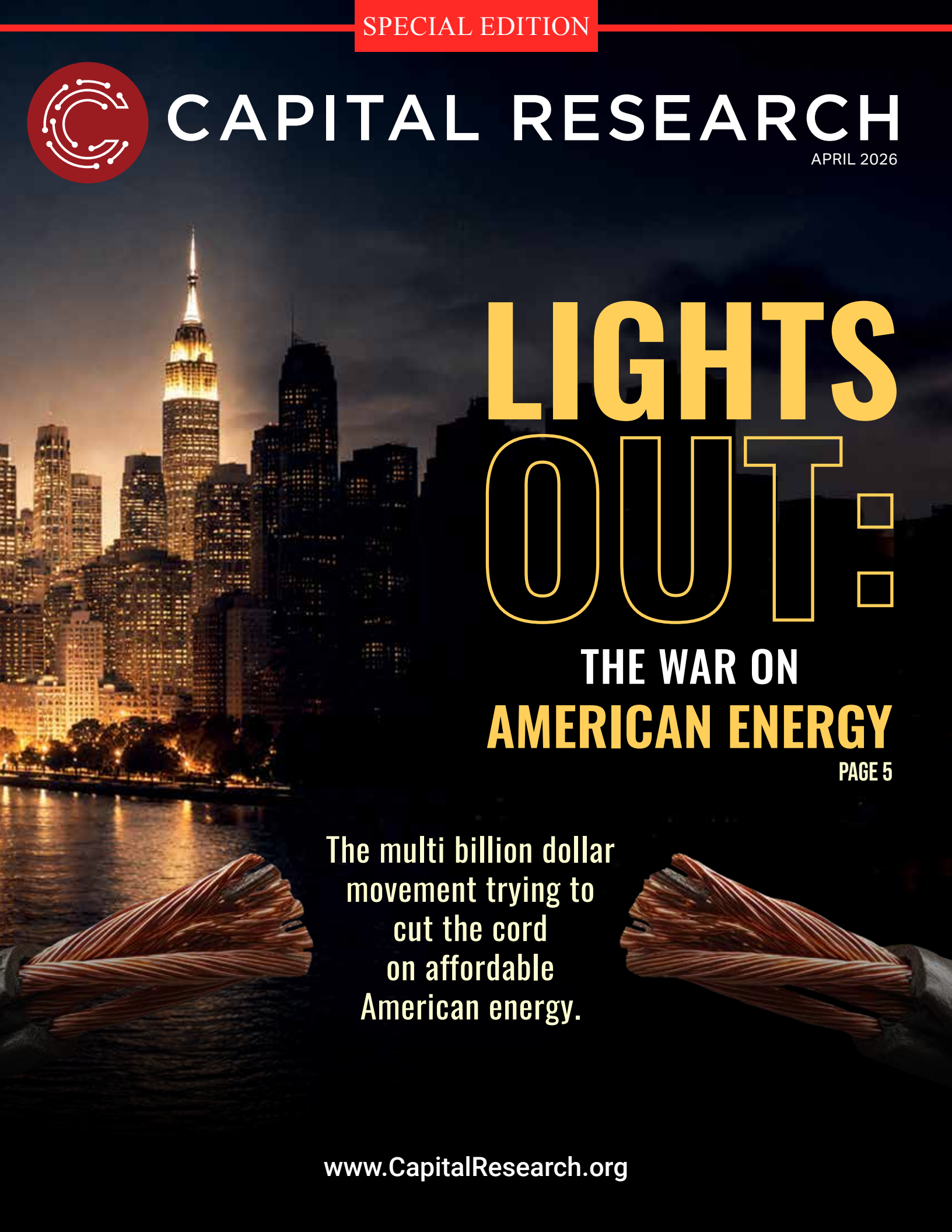
APRIL 2026



LIGHTS OUT:

THE WAR ON AMERICAN ENERGY

PAGE 5

The multi billion dollar movement trying to cut the cord on affordable American energy.

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AMERICA'S INVESTIGATIVE THINK TANK

CREDIBILITY
WHERE IT COUNTS

CRC's Scott Walter has testified before Congressional committees multiple times on issues ranging from politicized nonprofits to environmental activists. And Hill staff regularly seek out our research as they vet and prepare for hearings and witness testimony.

U.S. Senate Budget Committee, April 1, 2024, *"Examining the Influence of Extreme Environmental Activist Groups in the Department of the Interior."*

U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, Subcommittee on Delivering on Government Efficiency, June 4, 2025, *"Public Funds, Private Agendas: NGOs Gone Wild."*

U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Oversight, July 15, 2025, *"How Leftist Nonprofit Networks Exploit Federal Tax Dollars to Advance a Radical Agenda."*

U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Federal Courts, Oversight, Agency Action, and Federal Rights, June 25, 2025, *"How Leftist Nonprofit Networks Exploit Federal Tax Dollars to Advance a Radical Agenda."*

U.S House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, December 10, 2024, *"Desecrating Old Glory: Investigating How the Pro-Hamas Protests Turned National Park Service Land into a Violent Disgrace."*

U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, April 30, 2024, *"Examining the Influence of Extreme Environmental Activist Groups in the Department of the Interior."*

U.S House Committee on House Administration, February 13, 2024, *"American Confidence in Elections: Confronting Zuckerbucks, Private Funding of Election Administration."*

U.S. House Ways and Means Committee, December 13, 2023, *"Growth of the Tax-Exempt Sector and the Impact on the American Political Landscape."*

U.S. Senate Budget Committee, June 22, 2023, *"Dollars and Degrees: Investigating Fossil Fuel Dark Money's Systemic Threats to Climate and the Federal Budget."*

U.S. Senate Finance Committee, Subcommittee on Taxation and IRS Oversight, May 4, 2022, *"Laws and Enforcement Governing the Political Activities of Tax Exempt Entities."*

U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Federal Courts, Oversight, Agency Action, and Federal Rights, March 10, 2021, *"What's Wrong with the Supreme Court: The Big-Money Assault on Our Judiciary."*

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Volume 11, Issue 2

About the author

Ken Braun, Managing Editor and Director of Content

As managing editor and director of content of CRC, Ken Braun edits *Capital Research* magazine. He also conducts investigative research and drafts profiles for InfluenceWatch.org.

He previously worked for several free market policy organizations, spent six years as a chief of staff in the Michigan Legislature, and also wrote political columns for MLive Media Group, a consortium including the Grand Rapids Press and seven other mid-sized Michigan newspapers. He is an alumni of Michigan State University.

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Capital Research is a monthly publication of the Capital Research Center (CRC), a non-partisan education and research organization, classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) public charity.

CRC is a tax-exempt institution governed by an independent board of trustees. We rely on private financial support from the general public—individuals, foundations, and corporations—for our income. We accept no government funds and perform no contract work.

CRC was established in 1984 to promote a better understanding of charity and philanthropy. We support the principles of individual liberty, a free market economy, and limited constitutional government—the cornerstones of American society, which make possible wise and generous philanthropic giving.

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CAPITAL RESEARCH CENTER
AMERICA'S INVESTIGATIVE THINK TANK

If their world exists, then our world will not

By Kristen Eastlick

Credit: Shutterstock

Every single day, organizations working to end American energy as we know it collect million, mostly in tax-exempt donations. The Sierra Club, the Natural Resources Defense Council, Greenpeace, the Rocky Mountain Institute—together they have built a billion-dollar machine dedicated to a single purpose: replacing the reliable, affordable energy that powers American civilization with weather-dependent wind turbines and solar panels that work only when nature cooperates.

Capital Research Center (CRC) has been shedding light on their efforts for a long time.

For years, CRC's Green Watch tracked the nonprofit environmental movement—its leaders, its funders, its tactics, and its real-world consequences. We have followed the "dark money" networks bankrolling climate litigation. We have documented the foreign billionaires quietly funding domestic activism. We have exposed the crony capitalism hiding behind the language of clean energy.

A full accounting of the organizations, the money, and the myths driving America's anti-energy movement, one that arms policymakers and citizens to push back, is the natural next step in our work.

The following pages are the initial installment of a comprehensive investigation into the organizations driving America's anti-energy agenda.

Before we exposed the groups and their donors, we felt we owed readers something more basic: a clear-eyed look at the factual claims that give this movement its power. This edition of *Capital Research* examines ten energy myths, covering topics ranging from sea level rise and energy prices to nuclear safety and electric vehicles. These form the intel-

> *…the material comforts Americans have developed over the last century would become far more expensive, if not entirely impractical, without hydrocarbons and nuclear energy. The standard of living for middle income Americans would decline severely without these fuels, and the poverty faced by lower income Americans would increase sharply."*

lectual foundation upon which billions of dollars in annual advocacy rests. Understand the myths, and the rest of the story becomes much easier to follow.

The facts are remarkable. Are you aware that Americans pay among the lowest energy prices in the developed world, precisely because we have resisted the policies these groups promote? Germany and the United Kingdom, which have followed the anti-energy prescription most faithfully, now pay more than double what Americans pay for electricity. China, meanwhile, has increased its carbon dioxide emissions by 109 percent since 2005.

Over that same period the United States reduced ours by 20 percent, mostly by replacing coal with cleaner-burning natural gas. That is a genuine environmental success story, achieved without sacrificing prosperity, and accomplished largely through the innovation these groups have fought at every turn.

The following pages are a taste of a much larger investigation into the organizations themselves: their leadership, their donors, their political networks, and the gap between what they say and what they do. Those familiar with our past work on "dark money" will recognize the formula: the names are often different, the playbook is not.

Sincerely,

Kristen Eastlick

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The first in a series of special reports

This issue marks the launch of an ongoing series of special-focused editions examining the architecture of influence behind America's most consequential public policy debates.

In each installment, Capital Research Center goes deeper than the headlines. We map the major issues at stake, the think tanks and single-issue advocacy groups that are shaping the terms of debate, and the institutional and individual donors whose philanthropic dollars are driving the agenda. Special attention will be paid to the role of big philanthropy: the foundations, giving networks, and major funders whose resources—and priorities—quietly but powerfully shape what gets debated, and what doesn't.

Our goal is to give readers a clearer picture of who is at the table, who is funding the conversation, and why it matters.

Watch for future editions in this series.

Why it matters: energy equals civilization

By Ken Braun

This report profiles the largest American nonprofits that oppose the continued use of hydrocarbon fuels (those based on oil, petroleum, and natural gas) and nuclear energy.[1] These NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) promote instead an industrial civilization run on so-called "renewables"—a marketing euphemism that in practice means replacing the hydrocarbon and nuclear fuels with wind turbines, solar panels, and battery storage. These NGOs also promote a world where petroleum-powered vehicles can be replaced with electric vehicles.

If their world ever exists, then our world will not. Everything that created and sustains modern industrial civilization depends on reliable access to abundant and inexpensive energy. The fuels these NGOs oppose are the only fuels that can deliver this.

Though these groups present themselves as environmentalists, we should refer to them instead as anti-*energy* NGOs.

While it is an exaggeration to say that we would be reduced to living cold, hungry, and in caves if the anti-energy NGOs accomplish their objectives, it isn't *that* much of a stretch. It is certainly not an exaggeration to state that the material comforts Americans have developed over the last century would become far more expensive, if not entirely impractical, without hydrocarbons and nuclear energy. The standard of living for middle income Americans would decline severely without these fuels, and the poverty faced by lower income Americans would increase sharply.

The agenda of these NGOs is an existential threat to the American civilization. The success they have had so far in promoting this agenda is a direct result of exploiting myths and misconceptions about the importance of the reliable fuels they oppose and the unreliable options they promote.

Here are ten of these myths and misconceptions:

MYTH 1

The climate emergency

Sea levels have been rising, carbon dioxide (CO_2) levels have been increasing, and human energy consumption has been a contributing factor. While these statements are objectively true, they are functionally meaningless. It is also true that fire is dangerous, but only a fool would presume this is the most relevant fact about fire. Relatedly, climate change is real, but this was true billions of years before there were humans to worry over it.

The belief that climate change is an existential crisis, or a "climate emergency" in the lexicon of the anti-energy NGOs, is not a fact—it's an opinion. The fear of flying is also based on an indisputable truth: gravity is dangerous. But the opinion that modern air travel is *relatively* dangerous is irrational, because flying is far safer than traveling by car.

While a valid opinion must be supported with facts, facts alone do not make the opinion valid. The most effective lies and phobias are those grounded in incomplete or even irrelevant facts. This is how the anti-energy NGOs have built the "climate emergency" fear.

For example, the Sierra Club, the oldest of the major anti-energy groups, makes this alarmist claim:

So, the seas are rising … but by less than the thickness of three pennies per year. It's manageable and not a crisis."

> The impacts of climate change are here, and they will only grow more frequent and more severe—from extreme weather and unnatural disasters like fires, floods, heatwaves, and hurricanes, to rising sea levels and global food or water shortages, to ecosystem collapse and biodiversity loss—if we don't act. We only have a few short years to implement the transformational changes needed to reduce greenhouse emissions and maintain a livable climate.[2]

Central to all of this is the belief in massive sea level increases, with many alarmists hinting at 20 feet. "Glacial melt of the Greenland ice sheet is a major predictor of future sea level rise; if it melts entirely, global sea levels could rise 20 feet," claims the World Wildlife Fund.[3]

Do we really only have "a few short years" to save our "livable climate" from this? Hardly.

From February 1993 through December 2025, according to NASA, global mean sea level went up 103.8 millimeters—or 4 *inches*. NASA believes the current pace of increase is 0.44 centimeters per year, or less than the thickness of three pennies stacked atop each other. [4]

At that rate of increase it will take *1,387 years* for seas to rise another 20 feet. That would happen in the year 3413—or the early 35th century. The writers working on the *Star Trek* franchise still haven't imagined a universe beyond the 32nd century, and that's after more than sixty years of storylines.[5]

Looking backward in history, the sea was rising naturally, long before humans were burning hydrocarbons, and we adapted to it. Humanity has obviously adapted to the four inches of sea rise since 1993 without any substantive concerns, but that's less than half the story.

Earth.gov, a partnership of the federal government, the World Bank and the United Nations, reports that "global sea level has been rising since the 19th century, when modern records began" and have gone up 6–8 inches since 1920. [6]

Long before the 1800s (the 19th century) we figured out how to adjust our civilization to small differences in sea level and can continue to do so.

Consider the Netherlands, where the locals have been building dikes to reclaim land from the sea since the Iron Age. A 70-centimeter barrier, which is big enough to hold back a cumulative 140 years of our current rate of sea level increase, was built sometime before the 7th century. The 21st century Dutch have gone far beyond that: one third of the nation's land is below sea level, some of it 22 feet below. [7] [8]

So, the seas are rising … but by less than the thickness of three pennies per year. It's manageable and not a crisis.

Similarly, humans have spent thousands of years, and in particular the last few decades, adapting successfully to hurricanes and other forms of "extreme" weather. If hurricanes were truly growing more frequent and more deadly, then we would be well-placed to respond.

But this is not what has been happening.

A page hosted by the federal government's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) examines "Global Warming and Hurricanes" with the assumption that gradually warming temperatures have increased the fuel (i.e.: warm ocean water) that causes these storms. (As of this writing, the page was last revised in November 2024.) A section that examines a century of storms in the Atlantic Ocean reaches this conclusion, which the authors elected to emphasize with **bold** typeface: [9]

> **We conclude that the historical Atlantic hurricane data at this stage do not provide compelling evidence for a substantial greenhouse warming-induced century-scale increase in: frequency of tropical storms, hurricanes, or major hurricanes, or in the proportion of hurricanes that become major hurricanes.** [10]

Much the same can be said of the other "extreme" weather claims made by the anti-energy NGOs. According to Our World in Data, which bases its claim on research from the Global Wildfire Information System, the land scorched by wildfires over the last two decades has *declined*. [11]

One thing that has gotten measurably worse is the *damage* inflicted by extreme weather of all sorts, particularly hurricanes and wildfires. This factor has led to erroneous claims that the *storms themselves* are growing worse at a dangerous rate.

But for obvious reasons, Americans love to live near our western mountains and eastern shorelines—respectively prone to wildfires and hurricanes before there even was an America. So, many of our most expensive communities are in the path of predictable destruction. Fortunately, as with the (slowly) rising seas, the solution to this challenge is economic growth, which permits us to build back with even greater resilience.

And here the anti-energy NGOs are correct about one thing. Cutting off our access to hydrocarbons and nuclear power will indeed reduce the economic damage done by hurricanes and wildfires, but only because it will wipe out the prosperity that permits us to build these communities in the first place.

MYTH 2

Energy Prices

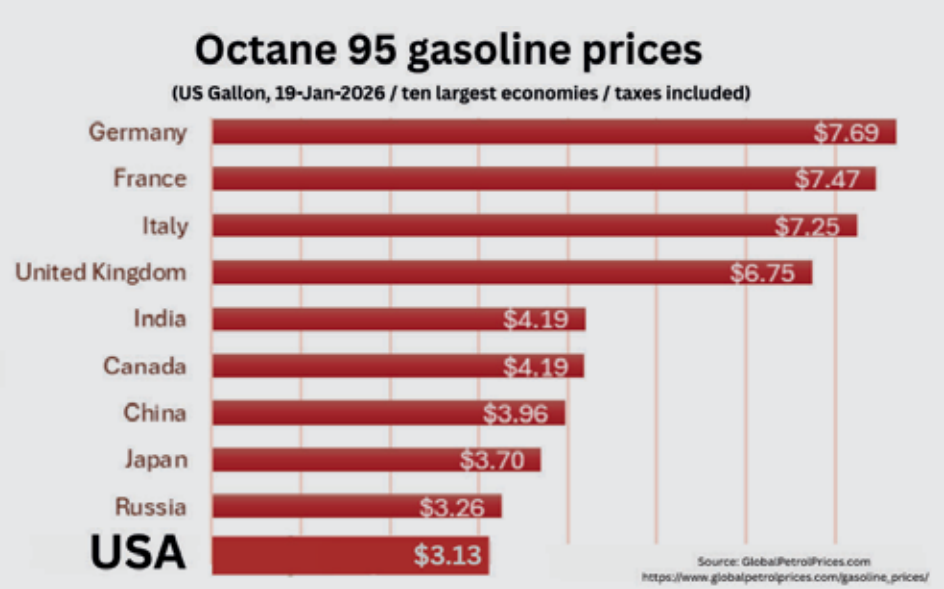
Anti-energy NGOs and the corporate media rarely address the low energy prices paid by Americans relative to the rest of the rich world.

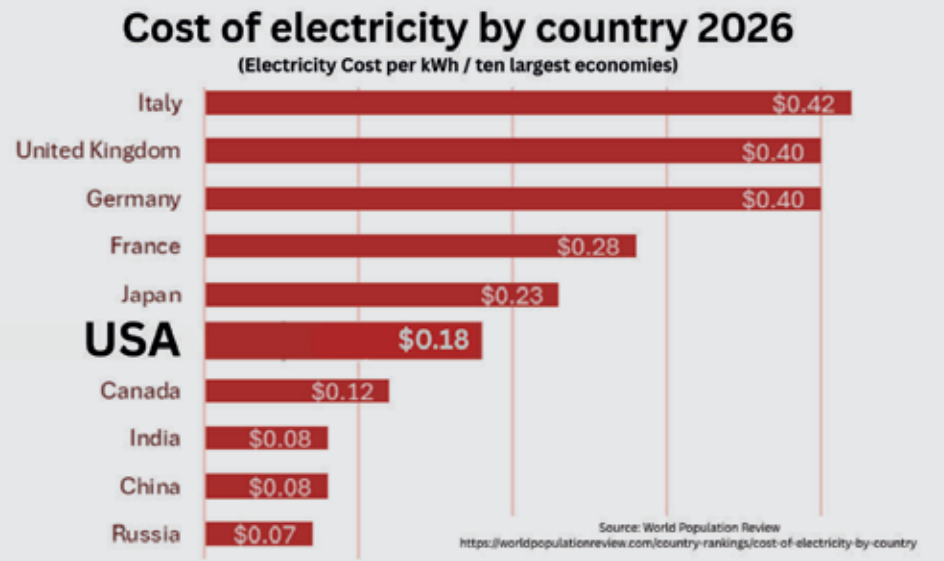
The United States produces 26 percent of the Earth's gross domestic product (GDP), which is more than the next three largest economies (China, Germany, and Japan) *combined.* American economic dominance is more striking when displayed relative to population. The World Bank reported that American gross domestic product *per person* in 2024 (the latest year in their online database) was $84,534. The GDP per person of second place Germany was $56,103, or just 66.4 percent of the American total. Italy and Japan had less than half the GDP per person of the USA. And China—the world's second largest economy when measured by total GDP—provided just $13,303 per person, or *less than 16 percent* of the American average. [12]

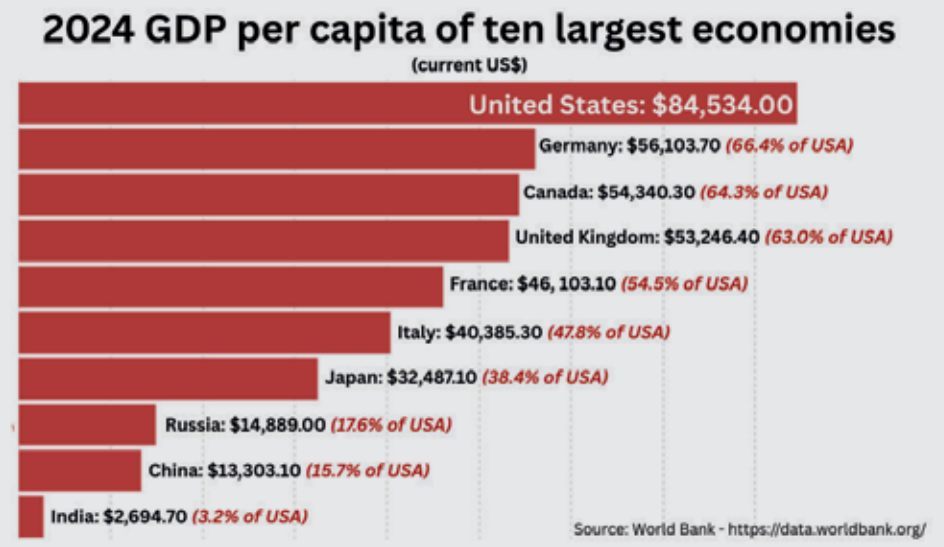
Far wealthier than the people living in the planet's nine other biggest economies, Americans could afford to pay far more for energy. *But we do not*. Relative to the rest of the world, particularly the nations that have placed a high priority on phasing out hydrocarbon fuels, Americans pay comparatively little for power and gasoline. [13] [14]

Of those ten largest economies, none have so fully embraced abandonment of hydrocarbon fuels *and* nuclear energy as Germany and the United Kingdom. Both have just as

> *…California, the American state that has most closely replicated the anti-hydrocarbon energy policies of Germany and the United Kingdom, also replicates the high energy prices. … In 2024, Californians paid the second highest retail price for electricity in the nation, behind only Hawaii."*







eagerly embraced replacing these reliable options with weather dependent wind turbines and solar panels. (In January 2026, the current German chancellor belatedly conceded that shutting down the nation's once-potent fleet of nuclear stations was a mistake.)[15] [16]

The UK and Germany both pay more than double what Americans do for electricity, as does Italy. [17]

The story is similar for gasoline prices. [18]

For the above, it is important to note that these prices account for different taxes imposed by the respective nations. But tax policy, as it applies to energy purchases, is inseparable from energy policy.

For example, California, the American state that has most closely replicated the anti-hydrocarbon energy policies of Germany and the United Kingdom, also replicates the high energy prices.

In 2024, Californians paid the second highest retail price for electricity in the nation, behind only Hawaii (the state with the greatest logistical challenges to bringing in power and everything else). Californians paid more than double the USA average per kilowatt hour and—making the sting worse—more than double all three of their immediate neighbors (Arizona, Nevada, and Oregon). [19]

Similarly, for January 2026, AAA reported Californians paying an average of $4.21 for a gallon of regular gasoline. This was $1.36 more than the national average of $2.85 per gallon and (as with electricity) second highest behind only Hawaii. And once again, Californians living near their border could have saved 84 cents per gallon by driving to Nevada, 86 cents by going to Oregon, and $1.23 in Arizona. [20]

MYTH 3

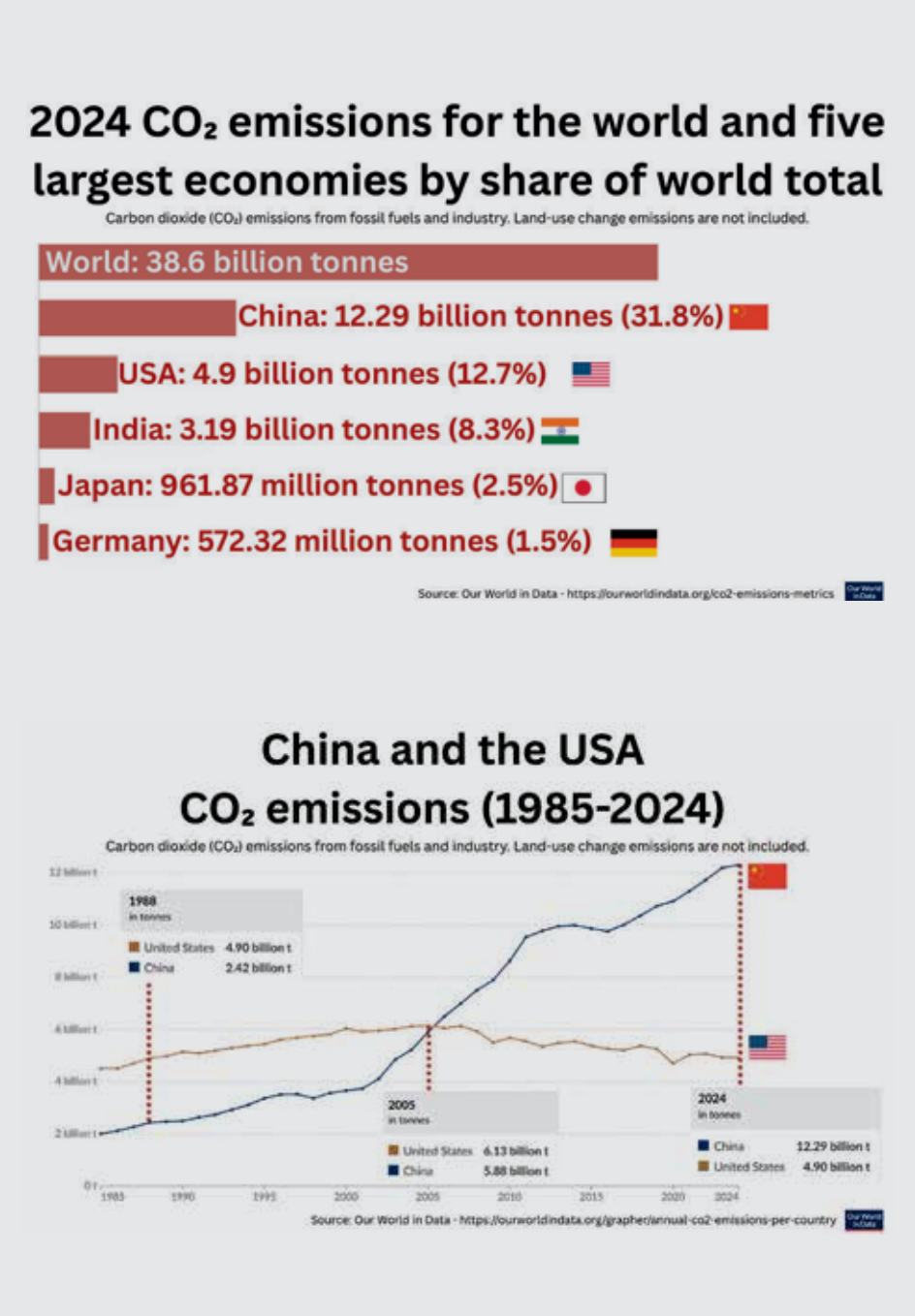
American CO_2 emissions

The anti-energy NGOs operate from the presumption that major reductions in American use of oil, natural gas, and coal will meaningfully reduce the world's CO_2 emissions and thus reduce global warming. This assumption does not account for the unique size of the American economy nor our comparatively small contribution to total planetary carbon dioxide emissions.

Despite being the planet's undisputed economic superpower, the United States produces a comparatively small share of CO_2 emissions relative to our massive economy; a little less than 13 percent of the total. Nearly 32 percent of world's CO_2 comes from China. [21] [22]

The trajectory of US and China CO_2 emissions also reinforces the relative insignificance of reducing American hydrocarbon use.

American CO_2 emissions in 2024 were 4.9 billion tonnes—identical to the USA carbon dioxide emissions from 1988. But Chinese CO_2 emissions in 2024 were 12.29 billion tonnes, *five times more* than China's emissions in 1988, and obviously more than double the American emissions. [23]



> *Despite being the planet's undisputed economic superpower, the United States produces a comparatively small share of CO_2 emissions relative to our massive economy; a little less than 13 percent of the total. Nearly 32 percent of world's CO_2 comes from China."*

A reasonable counterpoint is that China was still an immature economy in 1988, and by 2024 had grown to the world's second largest.

Fair enough. By 2005 China was growing rapidly and this was the last year that its CO_2 emissions were lower than the USA. Since then, China has become (by far) the largest national emitter of carbon dioxide. Conveniently for this analysis, 2005 also marked the year American emissions peaked at an all-time high of 6.13 billion tonnes. From 2005 until 2024, USA carbon emissions fell by 20 percent while China's increased by *109 percent*. [24]

Unlike China and other developing nations (such as India) the USA has mastered a growing and prosperous economy without increasing CO_2 emissions. This becomes even more clear when we look at American carbon dioxide emissions per person.

USA CO_2 emissions per capita in 2024 were less than in 1940—the year before the attack on Pearl Harbor and American entry into World War II. The dramatic decline began this century, starting in 2000. From there until 2024, USA CO_2 emissions per person plummeted by 33.6 percent.[25]

MYTH 4

Fracking and natural gas

The anti-energy NGOs all oppose the expansion of natural gas production and use. For example, a January 2024 news release from Greenpeace referred to the USA's liquified natural gas terminals as "climate Death Stars that will decimate both local communities and our planet." [26]

The American left was not always so hostile to natural gas.

Ramparts, for example, was a stridently left-wing, often communist-sympathizing glossy magazine that was published from the early 1960s through 1975. But for the October 1973 issue, *Ramparts* environmental reporter James Ridgeway wrote the following: "In the late 1960s there was a particularly keen demand for the **clean burning natural gas** because of air pollution in big metropolitan areas." [emphasis added] [27]

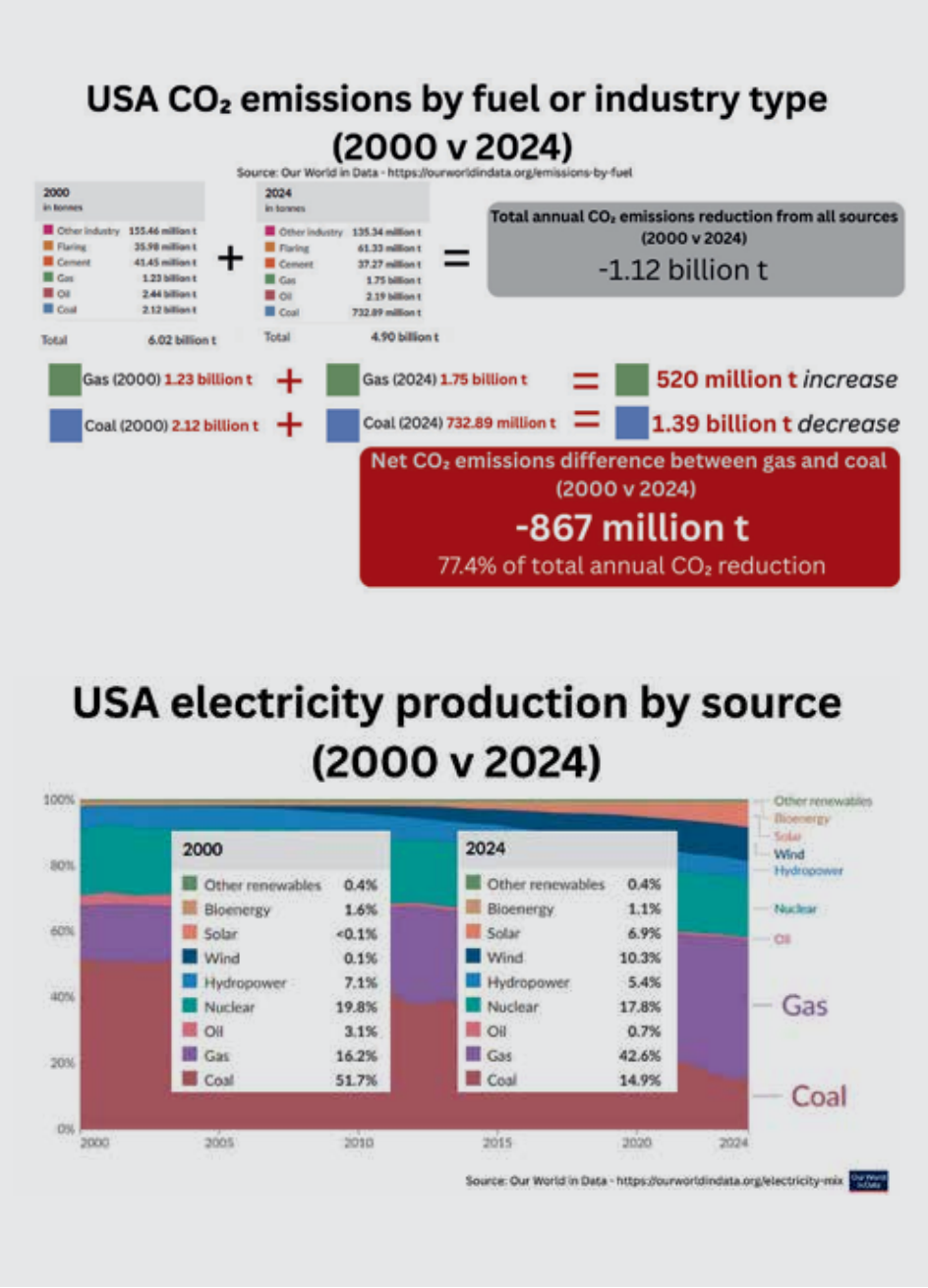
Ridgeway was correct. Natural gas was then and remains today a far cleaner fuel than any other hydrocarbon.

A 2010 report in *Scientific American* stated that when natural gas is used to fuel a power plant it "emits about half of the carbon dioxide emissions as conventional coal plants." This assertion is confirmed by multiple reports from the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Agency (EIA). In June 2021 the EIA posted an analysis with this headline: "Electric power sector CO_2 emissions drop as generation mix shifts from coal to natural gas." [28] [29] [30]

That's putting it mildly.

Since 2000, hydraulic fracturing ("fracking"), combined with advanced geological mapping has turned the United States into the world's top natural gas producer. The International Energy Agency (IEA) credited the USA with more than 25 percent of the world's natural gas output in 2023. This was more than the *combined* gas production of second place Russia and third place Iran. [31]

> *By 2024, the two hydrocarbons had traded places: natural gas had been developed into the top fuel, at 42.6 percent of total electricity production, and coal had fallen to third place at 14.9 percent. The impact on CO_2 emissions was just as striking."*



Of course, this also made America the undisputed top producer of CO_2 emissions from natural gas. But remember the trade-off: replacing kilowatts from coal with cleaner-burning gas kilowatts means a dramatic cut in overall carbon dioxide emissions. [32]

In 2000, natural gas was the clear third-place fuel for American electricity generation, contributing just 16.2 percent of the total. Coal was the undisputed champion, fueling 51.7 percent of total electricity production. By 2024, the two hydrocarbons had traded places: natural gas had been developed into the top fuel, at 42.6 percent of total electricity production, and coal had fallen to third place at 14.9 percent. [33]

The impact on CO_2 emissions was just as striking.

According to Our World in Data, USA carbon dioxide emissions in 2024 equaled 4.9 billion tonnes, a big drop from the 6.02 million tonnes of CO_2 produced by the American economy in 2000. Because of the transition from coal to gas, CO_2 emissions from gas in 2024 were 520 million tonnes higher, but coal emissions were 1.39 *billion* tonnes *lower*. [34]

The net annual reduction from the coal-to-gas switch (867 million tonnes) accounted for more than 77 percent of the drop in CO_2 emissions in 2024 as compared to 2000. [35]

To put that number in perspective, in 2024 Germany's *total* CO_2 emissions amounted to only 572.32 million tonnes. Similarly, France's total 2024 CO_2 emissions equaled 264.16 million tonnes. And that's not just gas and coal emissions (as in the American example) but gasoline, jet fuel, and everything else that drove the German and French economies in 2024.[36]

Germany and France are the world's third and seventh largest economies. So, just the American transition from coal to natural gas in electricity production since 2000 has canceled out the *combined annual* CO_2 emissions from two of the planet's biggest economic engines.

And then there's the world's second largest economy—China.

Our World in Data statistics show CO_2 emissions from Chinese coal burning jumped by 890 million annual tonnes between 2021 and 2024. This wiped out all of the CO_2 emissions savings the Americans made from the coal-to-gas switch. And in January 2026 the *Financial Times* reported that China will open more than 100 new coal-fired power plants during the year. [37] [38]

MYTH 5

"Fossil fuel" subsidies

In a 2014 interview, billionaire investor Warren Buffett made this observation about federal energy subsidies: [39]

> I will do anything that is basically covered by the law to reduce Berkshire's tax rate. For example, on wind energy, we get a tax credit if we build a lot of wind farms. That's the only reason to build them. They don't make sense without the tax credit. [40]

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, 91 percent of all the energy used in America in 2024 was generated from hydrocarbon and nuclear fuels. We are not unique: Our World in Data reports that more than 85 percent of the planet's energy consumption comes from these four fuels. [41] [42]

During a 14-year stretch from 2010 through 2023, according to an October 2024 report from the Texas Public Policy Foundation, hydrocarbon and nuclear fuels combined received $79 billion in federal energy subsides. [43]

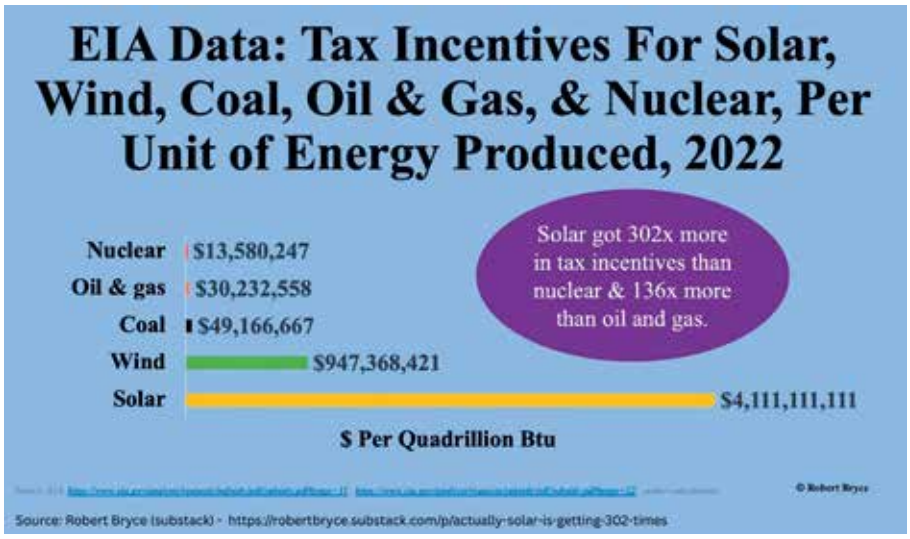
That report also shows a far larger subsidy of $141 billion combined for wind and solar energy development over the era. [44]

Similarly, in September 2023, energy journalist Robert Bryce compared federal subsidies against the energy produced by each system subsidized for 2022. He found that solar power received 302 times more in tax incentives per British thermal unit (Btu) of energy output than nuclear power, and 136 times more than oil and gas. Wind subsidies were 69 times more than nuclear and 31 times more than oil and gas. [45]

And all of this is just a partial look at the huge corporate subsidies that have been dedicated to weather dependent energy systems. The federal wind and solar credits for commercial energy developers were first enacted way back 1992. [46] [47]

Wind power contributed just 1.6 percent of total American energy in 2024 and solar just 1.2 percent. For comparison, the Department of Energy claims the burning of wood and other biomass was good for 2.3 percent of total energy output. [48] [49]

So, after more than three decades of outsized federal subsidies that were supposed to turn wind and solar into the fuels of our future, they are still unable to rival the output of an energy option that has existed since we first harnessed fire 400,000 years ago. [50]



> *…solar power received 302 times more in tax incentives per British thermal unit (Btu) of energy output than nuclear power, and 136 times more than oil and gas. Wind subsidies were 69 times more than nuclear and 31 times more than oil and gas."*

FOREIGN INFLUENCE IN AMERICAN NONPROFITS

CAPITAL RESEARCH CENTER
AMERICA'S INVESTIGATIVE THINK TANK

Scott Walter testifies before the U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means

On Tuesday, February 10, Scott Walter, President of Capital Research Center, testified before the prestigious House Ways and Means Committee regarding the growing threat of malign foreign influence operating through American nonprofit organizations.

A Clear Endorsement of CRC's Work

Congresswoman Claudia Tenney (R–NY) thanked Scott for his testimony, re-quoting his powerful statement:

> ***"The line between Philanthropy and Politics has been obliterated."***

Stu Smith of *City Journal* summarized the testimony:

> ***"His bottom line was simple. Domestic pseudo-philanthropy is bad. Foreign money flowing through alleged charities is far worse, and it is a channel most Americans reject outright."***

Join the Work. Stay Informed. Make an Impact.

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Capital Research Center is proud of the return on investment it offers its loyal friends and supporters.

2026 is a critical year for America. CRC is in the fight to help expose the funding networks seeking to undermine our Republic. To do this, **we need your help.**

Donation Options

Visit CapitalResearch.org/Donate to contribute online. Email donation questions to Julie Taylor at Development@CapitalResearch.org. She can also help you make a gift of stock or discuss how to include CRC in your estate plan.

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MYTH 6

Electric vehicles and emissions

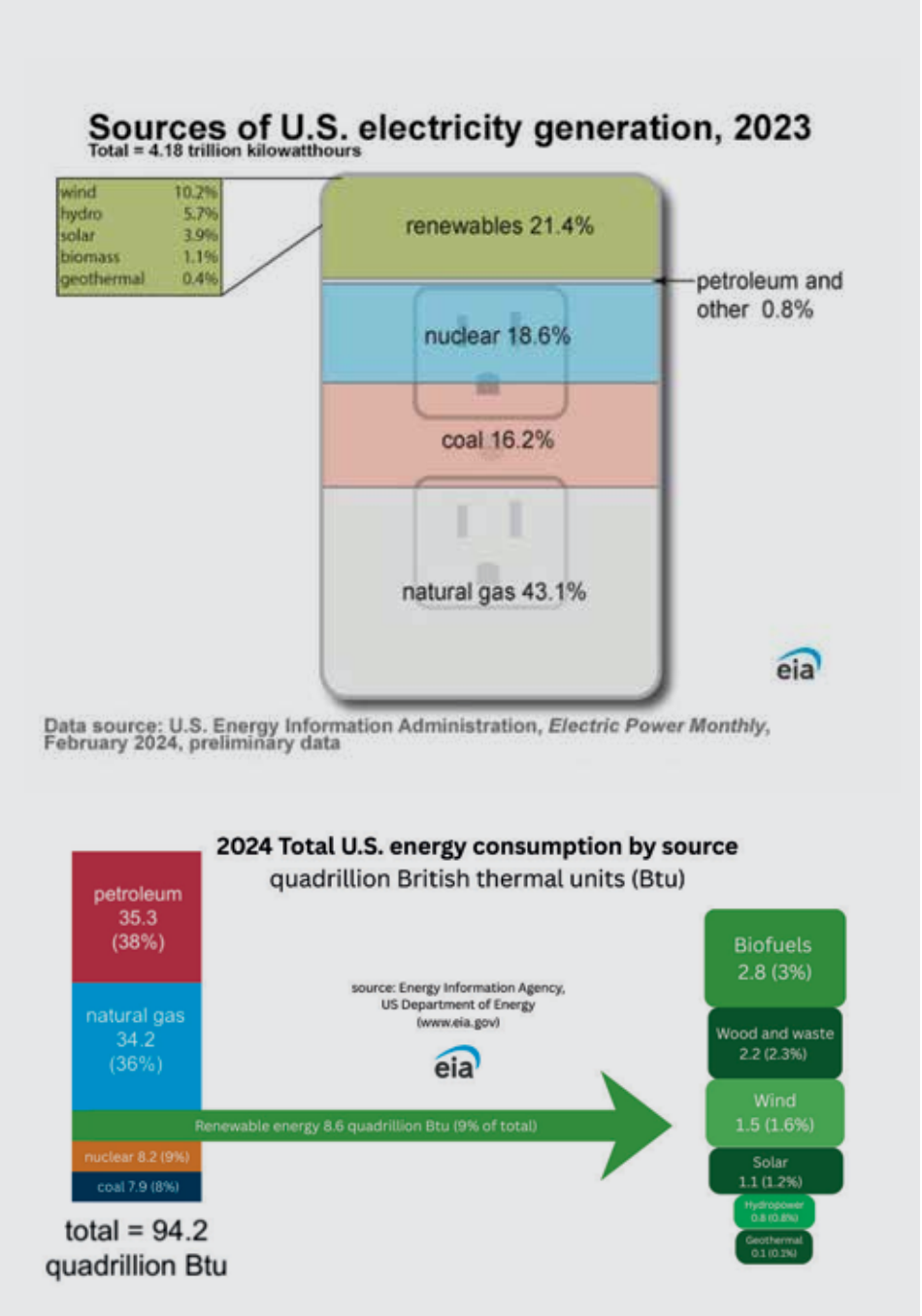
Another major recipient of federal subsidies has been the electric vehicle (EV) market. Just one of these, a $7,500 consumer tax credit for the purchase of EVs, was created in 2008 and lasted for the next 17 years until Congress and the Trump administration killed it off in 2025. [51]

The assumption promoted by politicians and anti-energy NGOs to justify these payoffs is that EVs produce no greenhouse gas emissions because rather than running on gasoline or diesel they use … *electricity*.

But electricity is a mere carrier of energy, not a source. And according to the U.S. Department of Energy, 78 percent of American electricity is still generated with hydrocarbons and nuclear fuels. [52]

Each electric vehicle charging up in America is more likely to be powered by coal, natural gas, or petroleum (60 percent of total electricity generation fuels) than it is to run on wind or solar (14 percent of total electricity fuels). Coal alone still accounts for 16 percent of total electricity production.[53]

So, after 17 years of taxpayer support, many EVs are literally coal-powered cars.



While that's an ironic outcome, it is not a major one because nearly two decades of EV subsidies didn't lead to many EV buyers. The market share for American EV purchases did not break above 10 percent until the final year of the program—last year—and then only because the subsidy had been killed off, which led to the last holdout buyers cashing in before the subsidies expired. [54]

Ford Motor Company is emblematic of the EV disaster. In December 2025, Ford announced it was shifting away from the EV market to focus on gasoline engines and gas-electric hybrids.

> *So, after 17 years of taxpayer support, many EVs are literally coal-powered cars."*

According to a *Wall Street Journal* report, Ford had lost "$13 billion on its EV business since 2023" and was taking an additional write down of $19.5 billion, for a total EV red ink bath of $32.5 billion. The report noted smaller losses and similar pivots away from EVs by General Motors. [55]

Putting the Ford debacle in concrete terms, energy journalist Robert Bryce kept tabs in real-time on the EV deficits as a share of each EV sold. In Q2 of 2023, he reported $72,762 was lost for each EV Ford dealers moved out the door. (When the red ink exceeds the total price of most new vehicles, perhaps "sold" is a misleading term?) For Q3 of 2024, Bryce calculated the deficit was down to a mere $58,391 per EV. On and on it went, with quarterly losses always at or exceeding $40,000 per vehicle. [56] [57]

In June 2022, Ford CEO Jim Farley boasted that he didn't need to advertise the F-150 Lightning EV pickup because the truck would sell itself. By December 2025, the *Wall Street Journal* was reporting that Ford would "stop making an EV version of its F-150 pickup truck, called the Lightning." [58] [59]

MYTH 7

"Uniquely dangerous" nuclear power

Despite not having a tailpipe, most electric vehicles operating in America generate carbon dioxide emissions because at least 60 percent of our electricity is generated with fuels that emit CO_2. This is true for most of the world, with the important exception of France, which produces 70 percent of its electricity from nuclear power stations.[60] [61]

Nuclear power production does not create greenhouse gas emissions, let alone carbon dioxide. Nuclear power plants emit only water vapor—the clouds that rise out of the iconic cooling towers. No nation collects remotely as much of its electricity from nuclear power as the French, and as a result few economies—and none of the world's largest—have lower CO_2 emissions per person than France. [62]

Nuclear is the second largest worldwide generator of electricity without CO_2 emissions—ahead of both wind and solar and behind only hydro-electric dams. [63]

As the massive French buildout of nuclear power demonstrates, it is also the only CO_2-free electricity option that is both limitlessly scalable *and* reliable. There are only so many rivers on Earth that can be dammed up, and that's assuming they should be used for this purpose, because hydro dams require a lot of land use and impose other environmental issues. Wind and solar, which have land use problems as well, carry the additional burden of working only when the wind and sun cooperate.

Despite creating the first reactor and having the largest fleet of nuclear stations on Earth, the United States now generates less than 20 percent of its electricity this way. [64] [65] [66]

If present trends continue, the USA will soon be eclipsed by China. According to the World Nuclear Association, China is currently building out more than 41,000 megawatts of nuclear capacity, equal to 42 percent of the current American nuclear capacity. As of this writing, the nuclear industry trade group does not credit the United States with even a single reactor under construction. Total American nuclear capacity has been flat for more than two decades. [67] [68]

In spite of this, and despite years of lavish subsidies for wind and solar electricity, nuclear power remains America's single largest emissions-free electricity source, generating more annual kilowatts than wind and solar *combined*. If the will were there to increase America's production of CO_2-free power generation, then there is no better option than building a lot of nuclear reactors. The United States clearly has the ability and wealth to match and eclipse the Chinese nuclear program. Like the French, we could generate at least 70 percent of our electricity from nuclear power, or even more. [69]

The anti-energy NGOs, all of them gravely concerned about the impact of CO_2 emissions, are a major reason this is not happening. They also deserve blame for America's abandonment of its nuclear energy leadership over the last half century. The Sierra Club is "unequivocally opposed" to nuclear power and claims it is "uniquely dangerous." Over the last decade hundreds of other American NGOs have made similar statements, engaged in legal actions opposing nuclear power, or otherwise tried to impede it. The combined annual revenue of this anti-nuclear, anti-energy movement now exceeds $3.4 billion. [70] [71]

That means these enemies of American energy, and nuclear power in particular, are collecting an average of *$9.3 million per day*. [72]

Their claims do not match reality.

Credit: Shutterstock

One person died of an assumed radiation-related lung cancer several years after the 2011 Fukushima nuclear incident in Japan. All other reasonably-claimed radiation fatalities from the world's entire history of nuclear energy are credited to the 1986 Chernobyl disaster in the then-Soviet Union. [73]

In a 2017 analysis, Our World in Data reported the "*confirmed* death toll from Chernobyl is less than 100," and that the "best approximation is that the true death toll is in the range of 300 to 500 based on the available evidence." With these assumptions the report concluded that nuclear "is one of the safest energy sources" [74]

The vagueness of that estimate is due to the difficulty in attributing cancers discovered long after the Chernobyl accident to radiation exposure that occurred during the accident. Other reputable sources have come up with even lower fatality numbers. [75]

A June 2024 report from the U.S. Department of Energy stated the following: [76]

> U.S. nuclear plants are among the safest and most secure industrial facilities in the world. […] In the nearly 70-year history of civil nuclear power generation, with over 20,000 cumulative reactor-years of operation across 36 countries, there have been three significant accidents at nuclear power plants resulting in fewer than 30 deaths due to radiation exposure. [77]

"In the nearly 70-year history of civil nuclear power generation, with over 20,000 cumulative reactor-years of operation across 36 countries, there have been three significant accidents at nuclear power plants resulting in fewer than 30 deaths due to radiation exposure."

But whether the true number of radiation fatalities from the history nuclear power is 500 or 30, it's comparatively tiny when weighed against other energy options.

For example, 29 people died on a single day because of an April 2010 coal mine explosion in West Virginia. Just in American history, several coal mine accidents have claimed more than 100 lives, and three led to more than 250 fatalities each. A 1975 hydro dam failure in China killed tens of thousands immediately and 100,000 later on due to the impact of the flood. [78] [79]

The oil and gas industry is also more dangerous. Examples include the 2010 explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil platform off the coat of Louisiana that killed 11 workers, and the 1988 Piper Alpha oil platform disaster in the North Sea that killed 167. [80] [81]

And while wind and solar produce far less energy than hydrocarbon and nuclear fuels, even these technologies claim lives due to accidents such as falls, fires, and drownings.[82]

In a February 2020 report, Our World in Data compared the safety profiles of all forms of energy production, compared to the energy generated, and also included assumed deaths from air pollution. "Nuclear energy," they concluded, "results in 99.9% fewer deaths than brown coal; 99.8% fewer than coal; 99.7% fewer than oil; and 97.6% fewer than gas." [83]

Our World in Data also rated nuclear power as being as safe *and clean* as wind and solar energy. A March 2021 analysis from the Department of Energy confirms this point, stating that nuclear power "produces minimal waste." [84] [85]

The Department of Energy report added this context: [86]

> All of the used nuclear fuel produced by the U.S. nuclear energy industry over the last 60 years could fit on a football field at a depth of less than 10 yards!
>
> That waste can also be reprocessed and recycled, although the United States does not currently do this. [87]

That last part is a feature, not a bug. Having never recycled, the United States has essentially gifted itself a large stockpile of zero emissions fuel. France does reprocess and recycle its spent nuclear fuel and now obtains 17 percent of its electricity from the supposed "waste." As such, there is a good argument that there is no such thing as "nuclear waste." [88]

MYTH 8

Saving the Earth

Real estate is the shrewdest investment, according to the old adage, because "they're not making more of it!"

Policy changes can and have led to the creation of more bald eagles, wolves, whales, and other flora and fauna. But no policy can create more mountains and shorelines. At the most basic level, the land, skies, and waterways are our *environment*, and what we have is all we have. Those who claim to be conservationists should aim to conserve as much of what we cannot replace as possible.

Most studies on the subject have concluded that wind and solar energy systems are wasteful consumers of real estate. That makes them enemies of conservationists.

For example, a 2020 report on from the Brookings Institution, a DC think tank that excels at confirming the conventional wisdom of the center-left political establishment, reached this conclusion: [89]

> **Wind and solar generation require at least 10 times as much land per unit of power produced than coal- or natural gas-fired power plants,** including land disturbed to produce and transport the fossil fuels. Additionally, wind and solar generation are located where the resource availability is best instead of where is most convenient for people and infrastructure, since their "fuel" can't be transported like fossil fuels. Siting of wind facilities is especially challenging. Modern wind turbines are huge; most new turbines being installed in the United States today are the height of a 35-story building. **Wind resources are best in open plains and on ridgetops, locations where the turbines can be seen for long distances.** [emphasis added] [90]

On that last point, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management hasn't been shy about revealing the truth. The masthead of BLM's page for "Wind Energy" development has a photo of wind turbines towering in front of what would otherwise be beautiful, snow-covered mountains. Similarly, the BLM page for solar energy reveals an ocean of glass panels covering a desert landscape in front of another mountain range. [91] [92]

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Ocean of solar panels covering desert in front of mountain range.

Source: blm.gov

Wind turbines dominating snow-covered mountain landscape.

Source: blm.gov

However accidentally, even the anti-energy NGOs admit that wind turbines and solar panels block pretty views. The Natural Resources Defense Council's web page for "Renewable Energy" features an infamous photo of a previously green mountain range in China that is now buried under solar panels.[93]

Power stations running on hydrocarbon and nuclear fuel need not be placed in these pretty places, and they fill up far less land in the places where they are needed. The Brookings estimate that wind and solar "require at least 10 times as much land per unit of power produced than coal- or natural gas-fired power plants" is very conservative. Other analysts have come up with far worse land use comparisons.

An April 2021 study in *Bloomberg Green* calculated that solar energy needs 140 times the land area to produce the same kilowatts as a natural gas plant, 47 times more than an emissions-free nuclear plant, and nearly 18 times more than a coal-fired power station. The comparisons were even worse for wind: 370 times more land needed than natural gas, 123 times more than nuclear, and 46 times more than coal.[94]

Putting this in perspective, the *Bloomberg* report revealed that a 200-megawatt wind farm would need 19 square miles to do what a natural gas plant can do within the space of just a city block.[95]

The U.S. Department of Energy reports a similar conclusion regarding nuclear power: [96]

> Despite producing massive amounts of carbon-free power, nuclear energy produces more electricity on less land than any other clean-air source.
>
> A typical 1,000-megawatt nuclear facility in the United States needs a little more than 1 square mile to operate. NEI says wind farms require 360 times more land area to produce the same amount of electricity and solar photovoltaic plants require 75 times more space. [97]

Using this math, that typical nuclear reactor would fit on a patch of land about the size of a small golf course, while wind turbines would need 360 square miles. Indianapolis, the 15th largest American city by land area, is just a tiny bit larger: 361.4 square miles. [98]

> *"Wind and solar generation require at least 10 times as much land per unit of power produced than coal- or natural gas-fired power plants, including land disturbed to produce and transport the fossil fuels."*

MYTH 9

Wind and solar energy are cheaper

According to an August 2025 report from the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), wind and solar energy systems have become cheaper than using hydrocarbon fuels to generate power:[99]

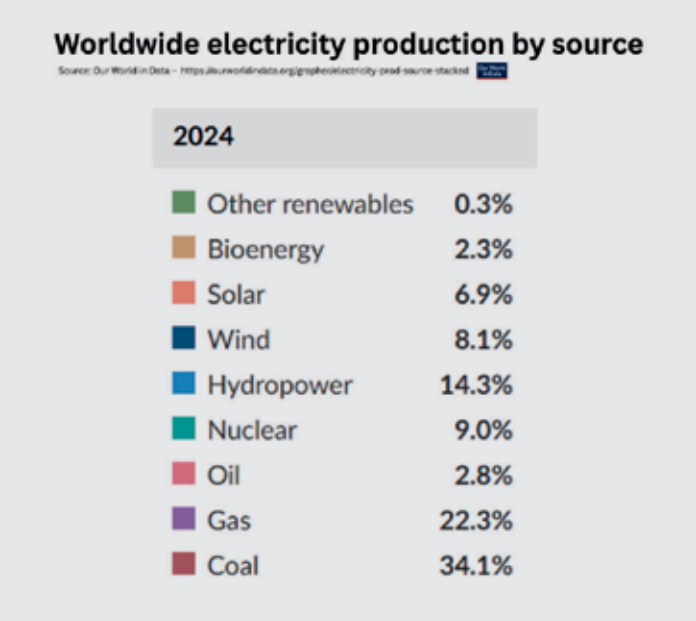
> With natural gas prices rising, and the costs of renewables declining, markets are quickly tipping. Before 2018, most clean energy projects were more expensive than their fossil fuel alternatives **(on a levelized cost basis)**. But in 2024, more than 90 percent of installed renewable energy capacity was cheaper. [emphasis added] [100]

This myth about the alleged cost advantages of wind and solar is common to many of the anti-energy NGOs. The bolded words in the quote above refer to a metric known as the "Levelized Cost of Electricity" (or sometimes the "Levelized Cost of Energy"). LCOE was developed to compare power generators that are all more or less dispatchable, meaning they can be switched on as needed and run reliably until not needed.

Unique among all the ways we generate electricity, wind and solar are *not* dispatchable. They are weather dependent. Comparing them to reliable sources on the basis of total cost per kilowatt is deeply misleading because not all kilowatts are created equal.

Think of a typical paramedic who works regular shifts and is also on call to pitch in when there are more emergencies than usual. Compare him to a hypothetical *non-dispatchable* paramedic, who is paid less, but only works when he feels like it, not when car accidents happen. Which one is worth more? Isn't one of them worth almost nothing?

Reliability is the gold standard of power generation. Dispatchable power stations that can be turned on quickly whenever demand peaks are much more valuable than power that arrives only when the wind blows or sun shines.



Conversely, energy that arrives when it isn't needed and there's nobody to use it can be as functionally worthless as that shiftless paramedic.

This is not the only flaw in using LCOE to compare reliable systems to unreliable ones.

For example, reliability of an electrical grid declines exponentially as more unreliable producers are added.

If the shiftless and needless paramedic is just one among a dozen emergency workers, then it might still be possible to schedule the other eleven around his laziness and keep the system from collapsing without further hiring. But if lazy paramedics become six out of a dozen—half the staff—then creative scheduling is no longer an option. A duplicative staff of reliable paramedics will need to be hired to cover for the unreliable ones, driving up costs further.

> *"Reliability is the gold standard of power generation. Not all kilowatts are created equal."*

And when that happens, expect the fans of unreliable paramedics to put out reports boasting that the "levelized cost" of shiftless emergency workers is far less than the cost of those you can trust to show up when you're bleeding.

The same is true of weather dependent power. As *unreliable* wind and solar energy are added, and reliable power stations replaced, the electrical grid logically becomes … *less reliable*.

If restoring reliability requires retaining (or adding back) reliable power stations, then the real cost of wind and solar should account for all the generators necessary to retain reliability.

Sometimes weather dependent power advocates try to evade this fact by claiming battery storage will do the job for them. But here again, reliable power generators—by definition—do not need batteries to retain reliability.

And battery backup might be even more expensive.

A 2018 report from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) estimated a $2.5 trillion price tag for using lithium-ion batteries to back up an American power grid that is 80 percent wind and solar dependent. (Yes, that's *$2,500,000,000,000.*) [101]

The MIT report correctly noted the insanity of this idea:

> If we plan to rely on them for massive amounts of storage as more renewables come online—rather than turning to a broader mix of low-carbon sources like nuclear and natural gas with carbon capture technology—we could be headed down a **dangerously unaffordable path**. [emphasis added] [102]

Wind and solar do indeed provide energy that is "cheaper," but only cheaper in terms of quality, not in true cost.

MYTH 10

Plastic pollution

"Plastics," according to the Earth Day Network, "are a danger to humanity and all living creatures, disrupting the delicate balance of life on Earth." This hostility to plastic (Earth Day Network promotes a "plastic-free world") is shared by many anti-energy NGOs.[103]

There is a method to their madness because plastic is derived from petroleum and natural gas. If plastic is *not* a danger to humanity, but instead a necessary ingredient for modern prosperity and survival, then the war against hydrocarbons will never be won.

> *"Plastic waste in the oceans is a real problem. But the causes and solutions are often misunderstood."*

Plastic pollution is the key to their complaint. "The flow of plastics into our environment has reached crisis proportions, and the evidence is most clearly on display in our oceans," claims Greenpeace. [104]

The Philippines is the world champion plastic polluter, according to a 2021 report from Our World in Data. The report credited the low-income island archipelago, home to just 1.5 percent of world population, with dumping 36 percent of the discarded plastic that reached the high seas. [105]

Logically consistent with this finding, Our World in Data's proposed solution to plastic pollution is to improve waste disposal options for low-income countries such as the Philippines. The other big contributors to ocean plastic trash cited in the report were India (12.9 percent of global total), China (7.2 percent), Indonesia (5.8 percent) and Brazil (3.9 percent). No rich nation came remotely close to contributing even half of one percent, while the nations of Asia and Africa combined racked up 90 percent. [106]

The United States was responsible for just 0.25 percent of ocean plastic waste—one quarter of one percent. Richest of the rich nations, the USA produces more than 25 percent of planetary GDP. [107]

Americans have obviously created and used lots of plastic. So, what have we done with all of it?

A lot went into Freshkills near New York City, once the largest landfill on Earth. (The trash dump made a cameo in *The Godfather* as the disposal site for a discarded gangster.)

Credit: Shutterstock

After Freshkills was filled up it was sealed up and rebuilt as Freshkills Park, a wildlife sanctuary where osprey and other cool creatures now thrive. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a page on repurposing landfills that reports "increasingly common end uses include parks, hiking trails, wildlife habitat, sports fields, and golf courses." [108] [109]

"Recycling the land, revealing the future" is the apt motto of Freshkills Park. [110]

While landfilling plastic and then recycling the real estate back into natural beauty is our major solution to avoiding plastic pollution, this is not the only thing that keeps our discarded items from hitting the high seas.

Another option is referred to by the EPA as "combustion with energy recovery," which means burning municipal solid waste (trash of all sorts) to spin a steam turbine and generate electricity. Using 2018 data, the EPA shows 21 percent of discarded plastic was recycled into kilowatts. [111]

Energy recovery has likely increased since 2018 because the American petroleum industry has advanced its production of pyrolysis oil, a recycling process that converts discarded plastic into fuels that can power aircraft and other engines. [112] [113]

These options for responsible plastic recycling and disposal are opposed by most of the major anti-energy NGOs. Some even oppose the most responsible uses of plastic imaginable.

For example, lead water lines really are a proven "danger to humanity." Regulators at the Food and Drug Administration and researchers at the National Science Foundation have concluded that PVC plastic water pipes are a safe, low cost replacement option. Similarly, the American Water Works Association supports PVC for its durability when transporting water in ground that is prone to frost, earthquakes and other stressors. [114] [115]

Lead water pipes are most common in low-income American communities where they are an acute threat to the mental development of small children. Far quicker pipe replacement has occurred and will continue to occur because of the low cost and unique benefits of PVC. But even this great leap

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OPEN SOCIETY, CLOSED EYES: THE $80 MILLION SOROS PIPELINE TO EXTREMISM

BY RYAN MAURO, *INVESTIGATIVE RESEARCHER*, **CAPITAL RESEARCH CENTER** AND
SCOTT WALTER, *CONTRIBUTING RESEARCHER, WRITER AND EDITOR,* **CAPITAL RESEARCH CENTER**

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forward for public health has been opposed by anti-energy NGOs such as Beyond Plastics. In December 2023, Beyond Plastics called on the Biden-administration's EPA to prohibit the use of PVC in water line replacement projects. [116]

In addition to the benefits to human health, plastics have been a major conservation tool. Before plastics, humans made eyeglass frames and other products from the tusks, shells, and other body parts of endangered creatures.

This means the earliest plastics landing in the landfills of rich nations helped save elephants, sea turtles, and other beloved species.

Plastics helped the rich world become wealthy enough to safely use and properly dispose of those plastics. The solution to plastic pollution is to help the developing world acquire the energy necessary to make them wealthy as well.

✦✦✦

Yosemite's conservationists

Editorial note: *The following is the introduction from the forthcoming Capital Research Center report on the anti-energy movement.*

Born in 1892 and now firmly opposed to the continued use of oil, natural gas, coal, and nuclear fuels, the Sierra Club is the oldest and most iconic of the anti-energy NGOs profiled in this report. Today, these enemies of energy are often referred to as "environment" or "climate" advocates. But this wasn't always the case. For a half century or so after the Sierra Club was created, it was equally, if not more common, to identify them as "conservationists."

The distinction is important. Those early conservationists were fighting to conserve landscapes and creatures treasured by humanity. Their primary goal was to enhance our general happiness and prosperity, rather than portray us and the reliable energy we need to survive as threats to the "environment" or the "climate." The creation of our greatest and oldest national parks and the saving of the bald eagle from extinction are just two of many objectively grand accomplishments that can be credited to the work of the conservationist movement generally, and the early Sierra Club specifically.

Ironically, an early Sierra Club failure provides the best example of the distinction between conservationism and anti-energy "environmentalism."

Formerly known as the "twin" of Yosemite Valley, because of its equally towering granite walls and waterfalls, Hetch Hetchy Valley is roughly 16 miles northwest of its supposed sibling. But since 1923, Hetch Hetchy hasn't been a "valley" at all, but instead a reservoir for a hydroelectric dam that has provided water and power for California's Bay Area. Flooding the valley cut 300 feet from the view of Hetch Hetchy's once awe-inspiring natural landscape. It has also denied several generations the opportunity to tour and stay within what was once a second, marvelous valley inside of Yosemite National Park.

More than century ago the Sierra Club began the ultimately futile effort to save Hetch Hetchy. Environmental historian Robert W. Righter has noted that this dam battle has been inaccurately portrayed as a fight between "wilderness and civilization," where only the needs of nature or human happiness could prevail, but not both.

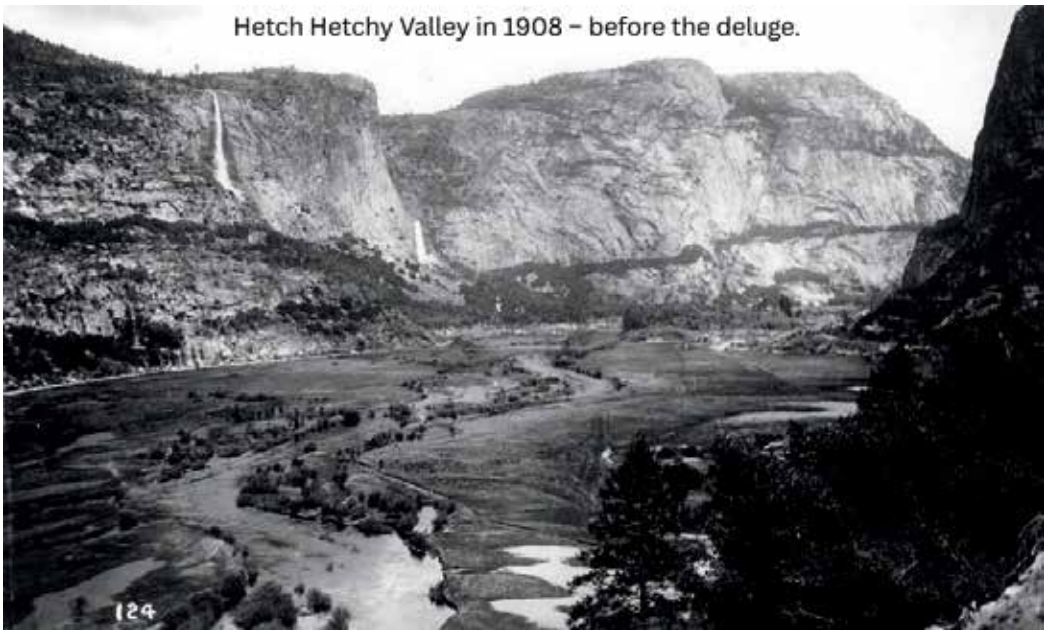
In his 2006 book, The Battle Over Hetch Hetchy: America's Most Controversial Dam and the Birth of Modern Environmentalism, Righter tells a different tale:

> The problem with this assertion is that no matter how we might choose to define wilderness, it was not an issue in the Hetch Hetchy fight. The defenders of the valley consistently advocated development, including roads, hotels, winter sports amenities, and the infrastructure to support legions of visitors. The land use battle joined over one question: Would the valley be used for water storage or nature tourism?

It took decades for the Sierra Club to devolve from yesteryear's pro-progress protectors of Yosemite's natural beauty into the anti-energy zealots that they are today. Even in the late 1960s, as explained later in this report, the Sierra Club was an important advocate for the construction of California's Diablo Canyon nuclear power station.

There are still a few old school conservationist NGOs.

The most prominent is The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Reporting $1.5 billion in annual revenue for the year ending June 2024, TNC is nearly four times wealthier than the richest of the anti-energy groups profiled in this report.



But unlike all of them, TNC has demonstrated that it can be somewhat realistic about the world's need for reliable energy production. An October 2018 TNC white paper endorsed quadrupling the supply of zero emissions nuclear power (from 7.8 percent of total world energy to 33 percent) as a path towards a "sustainable" energy future by 2050. While the report did (unrealistically) propose that 54 percent of world energy could come from unreliable or "renewable" sources, it also conceded that "fossil fuels" will still be necessary for 17 percent of the total.

Advocates for energy abundance can easily find concerns worth criticizing in TNC's energy agenda, such as the support for weather dependent wind and solar energy. TNC has also earned well-deserved criticism for its bare-knuckles tactics in securing land for preservation, most infamously and recently in the removal of ranchers from the Point Reyes seashore in California.

But those valid concerns aside, it is both inaccurate and unproductive to claim that TNC is an anti-energy group. The Nature Conservancy of today and the Sierra Club of yesterday both operated as if reliable energy was critical for human prosperity, which in turn created the wealth that made their conservation objectives possible.

That era should return.

As an example, there is a movement advocating for the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley. Predictably, the major objection is the need to replace the water and power provided by the dam. Civilian nuclear power and America's natural gas abundance did not exist when the dam was built, but today both options could be used to provide the power and desalinated ocean water necessary to replace the Hetch Hetchy output. Whether and when this might become economically sensible is a challenge for engineers and politicians to sort out. That is how we got the dam in the first place, after all.

But today's superior energy options allow us to make superior decisions regarding how much of the natural world we can afford to protect. If the old Sierra Club still existed and took up this cause, then the argument for restoring Hetch Hetchy would be far harder to dismiss.

The Sierra Club and the other NGOs profiled in this report never needed to become the primary enemies of reliable energy. Advocates for both conservation and energy abundance could and should once again become—quite literally—natural allies.

Credit: Shutterstock

Endnotes

[1] "Hydrocarbons" is a more precise term for what is commonly known as "fossil fuels." The latter is a pejorative that implies the modern chemical and engineering miracles needed to create electricity, gasoline, jet fuel, plastics, and much else are somehow as obsolete as dinosaurs, and that options such as wind energy are really the future. There is irony here, as wind energy, used since the first sailing vessel was launched thousands of years before Jesus was born, is far closer in age and technology to the dinosaurs than the hydrocarbon fuels. As this is a report about facts and not myths, misleading terms such as "fossil fuels" will not be used. Relatedly, some of the anti-energy NGOs profiled in this report have begun to make the same point about "natural gas," implying that it is a marketing term deployed to make methane (the major form of the natural gases we burn) seem more "natural" than it really is. The easiest refutation of this point is that petroleum-based fuels (gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, etc…) must be chemically refined to be used in engines and electric turbines while the natural gas can be burned pretty much in the form that nature or God made it, with little modification. So, it is arguably more "natural" than creating solar panels and wind turbines to refine sunlight and breezes into electricity.
Additionally, one of the earliest hydrocarbon fuels refined by humans was "coal gas," which is what it sounds like—a gas refined from coal. Complicating the terminology further, the British accurately abbreviated gasoline as "petrol," while Americans created the confusing "gas" to refer to their petroleum-based automotive fuel. (The old joke is evergreen: Brits and Americans are one people but separated by a common language.)

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