



CENTENNIAL HIGH SCHOOL MODEL CONGRESS CONFERENCE 2018
SENATE – ENVIRONMENT AND WORKS

CLIMATE CHANGE

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Senate Environment and Works committee for CHSMC 2018! This year's topic will focus on climate change and how the government should address it. This committee will discuss several subtopics pertaining to this issue to develop a thorough response to this issue. This committee will be composed of senators with several different stances on the issue, which will leave a lot of room for discussion of issues.

Hello! My name is Sydney Kelley, and I will be the chair of the Environment and Public works committee for CHSMC 2018. I am a sophomore at Centennial High School. I have been in the Model Congress club since my Freshman year, and I have been passionate about it since joining. This year, I am serving as the secretary for Centennial Model Congress. I also participate in Model United Nations and Girl Up, and I play softball outside of school. I cannot wait to chair for this committee and see the great bills you all will write!

My name is Ayomide Odetola and I will be your co-chair for the environment and public works committee for CHSMC 2018. I am currently a senior at Centennial High School. I began my journey with model congress my sophomore year of high school when I first joined. This year I currently hold the position as the Centennial model congress clubs fundraiser. Along with model congress I also belong to a variety of clubs including Salvation army, Red Cross, and run for Centennial's indoor and outdoor track team. I am excited to oversee this committee and I cannot wait to see the amazing bills all of you produce.

We are looking forward to a committee filled with lively debate on this prevalent issue, as well as bill writing that will help to shape the future of our environment. The topics of debate in this committee will ultimately be up to you, the delegates, but this background guide will focus on air quality, sea levels, and steps that have already been taken. We hope you enjoy learning about and debating this issue as much as we do, and we could not be more excited to see what you all put forth at this conference! If you have any questions, please email us at sydneykelley02@gmail.com and ayomideodetola1@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Sydney Kelley

Ayomide Odetola

CHSMC 2018 Environment and Public Works Co-Chairs

Parliamentary Procedure

In this committee, we will be following standard parliamentary procedure. The committee will include moderated caucuses, unmoderated caucuses, a speaker's list, and a variety of other points and motions. Please familiarize yourself with parliamentary procedure and voting procedure to prepare yourself for the conference.

Explanation of related topics

Biomes

There are five different types of biomes: aquatic, deserts, forests, grasslands, and tundra. The Aquatic biome is the largest biome, taking up approximately 75% of Earth's surface (The World's Biomes). This is an incredibly important biome to provide a plethora of benefits to several different species, including humans. Unfortunately, it is at risk because rising sea levels disrupt the processes the aquatic ecosystem goes through.



Urban forests



Urban forests can be used to reduce greenhouse gases by capturing carbon in the atmosphere through a process of energy conservation. In one year, urban tree canopy absorbed more than 500 metric tons of air pollution in Baltimore and nearly 400 metric tons in Washington, DC. With the durability and ease of planting trees, the use of Urban forests may prove to be a useful tool in combating climate change.

Disturbances/ stressors

Climate change may contribute to certain environmental disturbances such as wildfires and an increase in the amount of air and water pollution. Climate models give us a glimpse of the future, and most models predict a few general trends. An increase in greenhouse gases will boost temperatures over most land surfaces. An increase in global temperatures could also mean higher possibilities of drought and increased intensity of tropical storms.



Climate adaptation

A response to global warming that seeks to reduce the vulnerability of biological ecosystems that are highly susceptible to extreme changes in global temperature. Some examples of adaptation measures include: changing building codes to adjust to future climates, using water more efficiently, and further implementation of drought resistant crops.

Air pollution/ quality

Emissions of pollutants into the air can result in changes to the climate. Ozone in the atmosphere warms the climate, and different components of particulate matter have warming or cooling effects on the climate, which directly impacts climate change. Black carbon, a particulate pollutant from combustion, adds to the warming of the Earth, while particulate sulfates cool the earth's atmosphere. Atmospheric warming has the potential to further increase ground level Temperatures in multiple regions (Air quality and climate change research section, para 2).

Rising sea levels



Sea levels seem to be rising for two main reasons. 1. glaciers and ice sheets are melting and as a result they're adding water to the ocean causing it to expand as the water warms. 2. The depletion of natural water storage sources on land such as aquifers, lakes, rivers, soil moisture due to groundwater pumping, which is shifting water from aquifers to the ocean. In the world rising sea levels creates stress on coastal systems that provide protection

from storms and habitat for fish and various wildlife. As seas continue to increase in on the other hand, saltwater begins to intrude into freshwater aquifers, many of which sustain agricultural water supplies and natural ecosystems that are beneficial to the planet.

Recent Actions Regarding Climate Change

Phase-out of Solar Incentives (2015)

Incentives for the use of alternative energy sources will be gradually decreased, and production and investment tax credits will be completely gone by 2019 and 2021, respectively (Congress Climate History par.8)

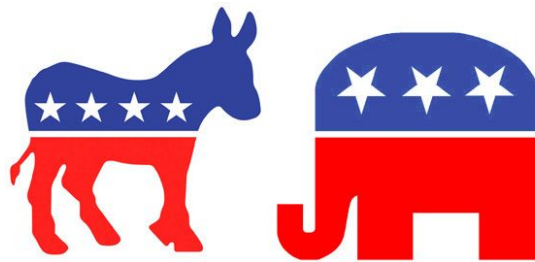
Climate Solutions Caucus (2016)

Bipartisan committee in the House of Representatives is formed in order to determine solutions that are both environmentally and economically friendly (Congress Climate History par. 9).

The United States Leaves the Paris Climate Agreement (2017)

Under the leadership of President Trump, the United States left the Paris Climate Accords, an international organization that was designed so countries could collaborate to reduce the effects of climate change. President Trump and his supporters claimed that the United States could not have benefited economically from the deal, as they were expected to make substantial changes and help developing countries improve their environmental practices and problems. Opponents argued that this would set back the steps made towards mitigating climate change

Political Party Views



Democratic Party View

Democrats favor more regulation on the environment and promote sustainable energy usage. “All nations have a role to play in combating climate change,” Former President Barack Obama stated in a 2016 speech, “And at home we led by example, with historic investments in growing industries like wind and solar that created a steady stream of new jobs” (The White House 2016). Democrats are willing to invest money in order to protect the environment, and have taken initiative to solve environmental problems.

Republican Party View

The Republican Party has demonstrated a split view on the matter of climate change. Some republicans argue for alternative energy usage, whereas some do not. The general consensus, however, is that republicans favor less regulation on climate change related issues. One Republican that argued against acting upon climate change was Rick Perry, who stated that, “There are a substantial number of scientists who have manipulated data so that they will have dollars rolling in to their projects” (NPR 2011). Another Republican who took an opposing stance was Ron Paul, who argued that, though humans were causing dangers to the Earth,

“Bogus claims about climate dangers should not be used as a justification to further limit the American people's freedom” (NPR 2011).

Questions to Consider

1. Is climate change caused by humans? Does it require action? If so, what actions can be taken by humans to counteract the effects of climate change?
2. How much freedom should businesses have? Should economic growth take precedence over environmental concerns?
3. Should the use of alternative energy sources be encouraged?

Suggested Resources

NASA Climate Change Website: <https://climate.nasa.gov/>

Bills and Actions Regarding Climate Change:

<https://www.c2es.org/content/congress-climate-history/>

Aquatic Biome

<https://www.c2es.org/document/aquatic-ecosystems-and-global-climate-change/>

Sources

<https://www.democrats.org/issues/environment>

<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-record/climate>

<https://www.npr.org/2011/09/07/140071973/in-their-own-words-gop-candidates-and-science>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/18/climate/trump-adviser-un-paris-climate-agreement.html>

<https://www.c2es.org/content/congress-climate-history/>

<http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/glossary/gloss5/biome/aquatic.html>

https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Features/RisingCost/rising_cost5.php

<https://sourceable.net/melbournes-urban-forest-strategy/>

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/political-animals-republican-elephants-and-democratic-donkeys-89241754/>

<http://archives.dailynews.lk/2009/07/16/wld28.asp>