

News Release



WYOMING SENATE DISTRICT 3

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EDITORIAL: RETHINKING CARBON DIOXIDE - WYOMING'S BOLD MOVE

The people of Wyoming have always believed in the value of questioning conventional wisdom, looking at the bigger picture and finding solutions that are possible and actually work. That's the purpose of the bill titled "*Make Carbon Dioxide Great Again*". This legislation is not about denying science, it is about applying science, thoroughly reevaluating the 'climate change' scientific assumptions and advocating for policies grounded in practicality, reality, and achievability - common sense.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is vital to life on Earth. Without it, plants could not grow, and without plants, no life would survive. Scientists and farmers alike recognize that higher CO₂ levels improve agricultural productivity. Plants thrive with more CO₂ - they grow faster, use water more efficiently, and are more resilient to drought. NASA's own research shows that rising CO₂ has contributed to a global "greening" effect, expanding vegetation and helping ecosystems flourish. CO₂ is plant food!

Yet, despite its essential role in sustaining life, CO₂ has been demonized as a pollutant. But what impact are human driven CO₂ emissions actually capable of? We are contributing a very small part of the natural carbon cycle. Current CO₂ levels are among the lowest Earth has seen over its long history. There were times in the past when ecosystems flourished under much higher CO₂ concentrations. Instead of vilifying this essential gas, we should be acknowledging its role in our ecosystems and industries and protect the benefits it has in our lives.

Wyoming is uniquely positioned to lead this conversation. Our state is vital to energy production, agriculture and food industries, transportation and energy reliability and stability. We understand the real-world importance of CO₂. And we understand the benefits of CO₂ used directly. Our industries already use it to enhance oil recovery, making energy production more efficient. This technology exemplifies what we are capable of when we treat CO₂ as a resource rather than a liability.

The bill *Make Carbon Dioxide Great Again* shifts how we think about CO₂. It proposes that we stop treating the essential gas as a pollutant or contaminant. It requires a clear-eyed look at how policies aimed at eliminating CO₂ emissions, such as decarbonizing the West, making Wyoming carbon negative or popular "net-zero" mandates. They may sound good on paper but often come with high economic costs and questionable environmental benefits, and clearly negative effects on our people and our industries. Wyoming must refuse to jeopardize our economy and energy security for initiatives that will yield - at best - questionable results.

Critics of “net-zero” strategies have highlighted the risks of pursuing policy goals without fully considering their consequences. These frequently require massive investments, disruption of reliable energy systems, and the forced undue burdens on families and businesses. Instead, Wyoming advocates for a balanced approach - one that evaluates the risks and possible rewards of any CO2 management plans that will safeguard our economic stability and way of life.

This approach challenges the status quo, and that is precisely the point. Now is the time to rethink how we talk about CO2 and climate change. This bill is not about ignoring environmental concerns; it is about addressing them with clear-eyed pragmatism and truth.

Wyoming is taking a bold step forward to lead a balanced, science-based dialogue. We all stand to benefit from this. Our energy sector, agriculture, transportation and all other industries, and even the broader environment, will gain when we use CO2 wisely.

This conversation is just beginning and must spark a national debate about the fundamental role of CO2. It is a debate we need to have - not just in Wyoming, with our own Governor and citizens - but across the nation and with all the organizations leading the charge to “net zero.” Let us challenge the assumptions, ask the hard questions, and make sure our policies truly serve the people, industry and the environment. After all, that is the Wyoming way.

About Senator Cheri Steinmetz:

Senator Steinmetz represents Goshen, Niobrara, and Weston counties.

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