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Green New Deal

Should Congress Pass a Resolution Recognizing the Duty of the Federal Government to Create a Green New Deal?

Honorable John Barrasso
United States Senator, Wyoming, Republican

Senator Barrasso was appointed to the U.S. Senate in 2008 and won a special election in 2008. He served in the Wyoming Senate from 2003 to 2007. He chairs the Environment and Public Works Committee and sits on the following committees: Energy and Natural Resources, where he chairs the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests; Indian Affairs; and Foreign Relations. The following is from a February 12, 2019, press release titled “Green New Deal: We Need Solutions, Not Socialism.”

Republicans have kept our commitment the past two years to put Americans back to work.

We provided much-needed tax and regulatory relief for people all across the country. We reined in Washington and freed job-creators. And now we are producing more jobs than can be filled. America is back in business. Our economy is booming — economic growth has accelerated. In just two years, we have created 5 million jobs in this country — 3 million jobs since Republicans passed tax relief. And 600,000 of these new jobs are in manufacturing. Last month alone, we added a phenomenal 300,000 jobs.

More welcome news: Americans are seeing bigger paychecks. Wages are up 3 percent — the highest jump in over a decade. And our unemployment rate is at a 50-year low. Clearly, our country is headed in the right direction. Pro-growth Republican policies have improved Americans’ lives.

Democrats, on the other hand, want to reverse course. Just last week, Democrats released their Green New Deal proposal — a big-government takeover of the economy masked as an environmental policy. The proposal isn’t green and it’s not new. It’s not a green deal — it’s a raw deal. If implemented, the plan will put millions of people out of work and it will cost tens of trillions of dollars. The plan to me is less about climate change, more about putting government in control of every facet of our lives.

Even if it were affordable — and it is not — the proposal is so far outside of America’s mainstream that it’s scary. The proposal reads like an absurd socialist manifesto. They call for a “national mobilization” to “transform every sector of our economy and society” and do it by the year 2030.

In just 10 years, Washington would create a command-and-control economy to eliminate choice in how we live. Washington would tell us how to travel, what our houses should look like, and what food is on our grocery store shelves — that’s just a starting point.

The plan includes a laundry list of government giveaways: guaranteed housing, college, food, health care, and a job. Even people who refuse to work, according to

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one press release, would be guaranteed a paycheck. In its lunacy the Green New Deal embodies the Democrats’ hard left turn. Under the plan, the Nation’s energy system would undergo a big-government takeover. Through heavy-handed mandates we would all be forced to meet all our power needs from costly zero-carbon and renewable-energy sources. The Green New Deal eliminates energy sources that currently provide power to three out of every five U.S. homes and businesses as well. It mandates the use of expensive energy sources that realistically can’t meet America’s needs.

It will mean the end of the internal combustion engine in cars, boats and planes. The plan will force every driver in America to purchase an electric vehicle or rely on public transportation. It also will eliminate airplanes and ships. American-made goods could no longer be exported around the world. There’d be no way to send them. Americans living on islands in Puerto Ricans and Hawaiians will be stranded. And it would put a stop to Americans taking vacations abroad.

An extensive and expensive national high-speed rail system would have to replace air travel. The state of California currently is attempting to build just one of these high-speed rail system to replace air travel. The cost is $89 million for every planned mile of track. So what happened today, just a few hours ago, in California? Well, California governor Gavin Newsome (D) said he is ending the State’s effort to build a high speed rail line between San Francisco and Los Angeles. That’s what the Green New Deal says we’re going to do.

And yet the governor today said they’re going to discontinue the plans. Newsome said in his State of the State address today that it would cost too much and take too long. Well, that looks like the Democrats’ entire Green New Deal. He said it would cost too much and take too long to build the line long championed by his predecessor Jerry Brown (D). Latest estimates pin the cost at $77 billion and completion in 2033. That is where we are today.

There’s another victim of the Green New Deal. It’s ice cream. Livestock will be banned. Say goodbye to dairy, to beef, to family farms, to ranches. American favorites like cheeseburgers and milkshakes will become a thing of the past. Millions of American workers will lose their jobs. Living this ‘green dream’ will be a national nightmare. Just the energy portion of the plan will cost at least $5.7 trillion — and it’s feasibly impossible.

Plus, the government handouts and giveaways will cost tens of trillions more. The Green Deal will bankrupt the country. The guaranteed-job program alone would cost hundreds of billions each and every year. Taxes will go through the roof as will energy prices. This is the tip of the iceberg. This green scheme undermines our entire way of life. The deal will impose a burdensome mandate on homeowners. Every building nationwide will have to be overhauled.

Home heating and electric costs also will surge. One estimate, said that the average energy bills will rise by as much as $3,800 per year per home. In reality, the only thing green about the Green New Deal is the cash it will cost American families. This is simply a Washington power-play posing as a clean-energy plan. It’s the same failed socialist goals the far-left has pushed for decades.

Socialism has failed everywhere it’s been tried, from Venezuela to the former Soviet Union. The path to cleaner energy lies in supporting private innovation, not government regulation. American energy-related carbon dioxide emissions have steadily fallen in recent years. The United States is currently on pace to reduce its emissions by 17 per-
cent below 2005 levels and we’re going to do it by 2025. We are leading the world in lowering emissions, over the past decade. A Washington takeover of the energy sector is going to interfere with that progress.

Congress should support affordable energy solutions that will actually reduce emissions and grow our economy. Cutting-edge technologies including nuclear power, carbon capture and carbon utilization hold enormous promise. Nuclear power currently provides about 60 percent of America’s emission-free energy. Some supporters of the Green New Deal have even talked about banning nuclear power.

Republicans support a common-sense approach to addressing climate change. We’re interested in solutions, not socialism. We must make American energy as clean as we can, as fast as we can, and we can do it without raising costs on the American public. The Democrats’ plan is a hard left turn that will drive our economy off a cliff. It’s the first big step on that dark path to socialism.

Simply put, the Green New Deal is a raw deal for the American people.

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**Honorable John Thune**

United States Senator, South Dakota, Republican

Senator Thune was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 2004. He served as the State Railroad Director of South Dakota from 1991 to 1993, Executive Director of the South Dakota Municipal League from 1993 to 1996, and in the House of Representatives from 1996 to 2004. He sits on the following committees: Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; Commerce, Science, and Transportation, where he chairs the Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and Internet; and Finance, where he chairs the Subcommittee on Taxation and IRS Oversight. He is the Senate Republican Whip. The following is from a February 12, 2019, Senate floor statement on the Green New Deal.

Democrats released their plan for a Green New Deal, although “plan” might be a bit of a stretch. It is more like a wish list because while Democrats announced their desired outcomes like getting rid of fossil fuels or upgrading every single building in the United States, they provided no details at all about how to get there. In particular, they failed to provide any details on how to pay for the staggering costs of what they are proposing to do.

Take just one provision of the Democrats’ green wish list: “Upgrading all existing buildings in the United States and building new buildings to achieve maximum energy efficiency, water efficiency, safety, affordability, comfort, and durability, including through electrification.”

That is a direct quote from the so-called plan, upgrading all existing buildings — all existing buildings. Well, the cost of that provision alone is practically inconceivable, but that is just a small fraction of what the Democrats want to do.

Their wish list also includes meeting 100 percent of the power demand in the United States through clean, renewable, and zero-emission energy sources, including by dramatically expanding and upgrading renewable power sources and by deploy-

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ing new capacity; overhauling transportation systems in the United States to remove pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector as much as is “technologically feasible” and much, much more, and they don’t limit themselves to energy initiatives either.

They also announced that a Green New Deal must include guaranteeing every person in the United States a job, healthcare, paid vacations, and more. It is possible the reason the Democrats didn’t provide any details about how to pay for their plan is because they knew that outlining the actual cost would sink their plan from the very beginning. I cannot even imagine the staggering amount of money that would be required to pay for the ideas on their wish list, and that money will come from the pockets of the American people.

Like other socialist fantasies, this is not a plan that can be paid for by merely taking money from the rich. Actually implementing this so-called Green New Deal would involve taking money from working families — and not a little bit of money either.

Before the introduction of last week’s absurd resolution, the Green New Deal was modeled and projected to cost American families up to $3,800 a year in higher energy bills, and $3,800 a year in higher energy costs would be hard enough for most working families I meet. But that would be just the tip of the iceberg under the Democrats’ plan because, of course, if your electricity costs are higher, then so are your business’s electricity costs, your doctor’s electricity costs, the electricity costs at neighborhood restaurants, and the electricity costs at your gym, and all of these places are going to charge more money to cover their cost increases so you are going to be paying more in electric bills and more on everything else as well.

Then there is the fact that the government will not be able to pay for one-quarter of what is outlined in the Green New Deal without raising your taxes by a lot. There is no question that socialist fantasies sound nice — they always do — until they end up victimizing the very people they are meant to help. As Ronald Reagan is reported to have said, “Socialism only works in two places: Heaven where they don’t need it, and hell where they already have it.”

Democrats’ gauzy, nebulous proposal may sound appealing on the surface, but it would devastate our economy and be paid for on the backs of working families in this country. The Green New Deal would be a very bad deal for the American people.

“I cannot even imagine the staggering amount of money that would be required to pay for the ideas on their wish list. . . .”

Honorable John Shimkus
United States Representative, Illinois, Republican

Representative Shimkus has represented the Fifteenth District of Illinois since 2013. He previously represented Illinois’s Twentieth District from 1997 to 2013 and he State’s Nineteenth District from 2003 to 2013. He sits on the House Energy and Commerce Committee and is Ranking Member of its Environment and Climate Change Subcommittee. The following is from his opening statement at the Subcommittee’s February 6, 2019, hearing on “Time for Action: Addressing the Environmental and Economic Effects of Climate Change.”

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We all agree that extreme weather events and climate change present risks to our communities — and communities around the world. While we agree these risks should be addressed, we may disagree about what to do. If we are to reach an agreement on this issue, I believe we must look more openly and broadly at potential solutions.

Many climate policy advocates have been suggesting for years that, if you agree climate change is real, then command-and-control policy prescriptions are the only way to address the problem.

If you question these expensive solutions, you must not accept the problem. This is a false choice.

And the amped up partisan rhetoric it generates severely inhibits a full look at potential, practical policies that not only help reduce carbon dioxide emissions but also ensure our nation and its communities can grow and prosper. Recent projections by the International Energy Agency show that fossil energy, even with all existing and announced policies implemented, will remain the dominant form of energy in our global systems through 2040, and likely beyond.

Wind and solar energy will serve a larger portion of electricity generation across the World and in the United States, according to this data, but fossil energy and nuclear energy — a technology regretfully frowned upon by many climate policy advocates — will remain dominant. While future innovation could substantially change these projections, the stubborn reality is, the U.S. and global energy systems necessary for societies to develop, grow, trade, and prosper depend upon affordable (and abundant) energy and mobility.

Policies that artificially raise the cost or availability of energy threaten to undermine this fundamental fact, which helps explain the 30-year failure of international climate agreements to significantly reduce global emissions. (Although the United States seems to be doing better than most other nations.) No nation seeking to improve the lives of its citizens will accept energy or transportation constraints, and neither should the United States if we want to maintain robust economic growth and remain globally competitive for future generations.

We could have a fuller conversation about accelerating the transformation to cleaner technologies if we accept that proposing top down government requirements to rapidly decarbonize the U.S. and global economies may not be the most realistic way to address the climate change problem.

We should be open to the fact that wealth transfer schemes, suggested in radical policies like the Green New Deal, may not be the best path to community prosperity and preparedness.

And we should be willing to accept that affordable (and abundant) energy is a key ingredient for economic development and growth. After all, economic growth and economic resources, coupled with sound planning, infrastructure, and governance, increase local capabilities to minimize impacts of future extreme events.

These are realities we should explore today and in future hearings if we want to develop sound environmental and energy policies to address climate risks. We should also focus on the ingredients behind the exceptional achievements of American know — how in energy, in technology, and in innovation that has led to world-leading prosperity — and make sure we can continue to foster these advances in other technologies.

The American shale revolution transformed our Nation’s economic competitiveness and is driving cleaner electricity generation because of old-fashioned innovation, entre-

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entrepreneurship, regulatory certainty, and private capital — not big government mandates. Let’s apply these lessons more broadly. There are different approaches to dealing with climate change.

Let’s focus on solutions that work for the American public.

Honorable Dan Newhouse
United States Representative, Republican, Washington

Representative Newhouse, of the Fourth District of Washington, was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2014. He served in the Washington State House of Representatives from 2009 to 2013. He sits on the Appropriations Committee. The following is from a February 11, 2019, column on his website called “‘Green New Deal’: a Nonstarter.”

Last week, Democrats heralded a “Green New Deal” framework promising “a massive transformation of our society” through “a 10-year plan to mobilize every aspect of American society at a scale not seen since World War Two to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions.”

The goal of being responsible stewards of our environment is certainly serious, but the details of this plan are not. Asked for her reaction, even [House] Speaker Nancy Pelosi [CA-D] dismissed it as, “the green dream or whatever they call it, nobody knows what it is but they’re for it, right?”

Plausible or not, it is important to discuss the details of the plan because national Democrats are serious about presenting it as a platform to radically alter life in the United States as we know it. Among the goals of the “green dream:”

- Eliminate the fossil fuel industry
- Provide economic security for those “unwilling to work”
- Upgrade or replace every building in United States
- Replace air travel with high-speed trains
- Phase out nuclear power
- Underscoring how radical this plan it, the drafters actually say they “set a goal to get to net-zero, rather than zero emissions, in 10 years because we aren’t sure that we’ll be able to fully get rid of farting cows [sic] and airplanes that fast”

I don’t know about you, but I doubt there are many Americans who are willing to work long hours at a full-time job, sacrificing their time and effort, to subsidize those who are “unwilling to work.”

This is not a sound or serious plan, and it would empower the Federal Government to redistribute untold trillions of taxpayer dollars. . .”

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be created to extend credit.” The plan also ignores the benefits of nuclear power and
doesn’t make any mention of hydropower — which currently generates about 70 percent
of the renewable and affordable electricity in Central Washington.

Representative Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez [NY-D] agreed that her plan would require
massive government intervention. As President Trump said in his State of the Union
address last week, “Here, in the United States, we are alarmed by new calls to adopt
socialism in our country. America was founded on liberty and independence — and
not government coercion, domination, and control. We are born free, and we will stay
free. Tonight, we renew our resolve that America will never be a socialist country.”
Indeed, we do.

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**Honorable Jeff Van Drew**
**United States Representative, New Jersey, Democrat**

Representative Van Drew, of the Second District of New Jersey, was first elected to the
U.S. House of Representatives in 2018. Van Drew served in the New Jersey State Senate
from 2008 to 2018. He sits on the Natural Resources and Agriculture Committees. The
following is from a February 15, 2019, press release.

I believe that climate change is real, is driven mainly by human activity and that it
is driving real-world changes such as extreme weather events, hotter temperatures,
rising sea levels, and ocean acidification. I believe that the United States has a moral
and economic imperative to mitigate the impacts of climate change. However, I do not
think that H.J. Res. 109, the Green New Deal, is the right solution.

First, the Green New Deal is simply a resolution, a wish list. It is not a serious
policy proposal. It seeks the complete reorganization of American society, which took
hundreds of years to build, in a matter of 10 years. The costs of this wish list are un-
imaginable.

Second, it mentions nothing about carbon-free, baseload power such as nuclear
energy which is responsible for a substantial amount of our current generation in New
Jersey and throughout the United States.

Third, the resolution veers wildly off topic and makes grand pronouncements that are
not in line with who we are as Americans. The United States of America is the greatest
and most powerful nation in the history of the world because we are a compassionate,
capitalist country.

In the coming months and years as a United States congressman, I will support
pro-growth, pro-jobs energy efficiency and clean energy proposals that reduce carbon
pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. We have an opportunity to become a global
leader in the clean energy industry, but we have to be smart and strategic about it. We
need to protect our environment and make our economy more sustainable so that we
can pass on a better world to our grandchildren.

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“The plan also ignores the benefits of nuclear power and doesn’t make any mention of
hydropower.”