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Global Warming: Fact or Fiction?

Global warming is one of the most contentious environmental issues of our time. There has been much debate in the scientific community about the existence and purported causes of global warming.

- Data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows an upward trend in the earth's temperature over the twentieth century. However, satellite data compiled by climatologist John Christy shows no such trend. Nor does data provided by readings from weather balloons.¹
- Climate data has been recorded only for the last century, making it difficult to definitively determine whether changes in the earth's temperature are caused by human action or just part of a natural climate process.²

The potential economic effects of implementing the Kyoto Protocol, or other legislation mandating emission reductions, could be quite costly, and should be seriously considered and weighed against the benefits of implementation.

- Kyoto requires the U.S. to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to seven percent below 1990 levels by the year 2012. Best available research suggests that the costs required to achieve this reduction would reduce gross domestic product (GDP) by \$300 to \$400 billion a year and eliminate 2.4 million jobs. Energy prices would rise well over 50 percent.³
- The agricultural sector of the economy would suffer under policies to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. A national program to comply with the Kyoto Protocol would cause total U.S. farm production expenses to rise more than \$23 billion, decreasing net profits for farmers.⁴

Sources:

¹David Hogberg, "The Global Warming 'Controversy'," from *The Myths of Environmental Education*, Public Interest Institute Policy Study, April 2001, p. 5.

²Ibid.

³"Greenhouse Gas Control: Implications for Agriculture," *Executive Summary*, The Heartland Institute, No. 102, August 2003, p. 2.

⁴Ibid.

By David Hogberg and Amy K. Frantz, Research Analysts

public.interest.institute@limitedgovernment.org Phone: 319-385-3462 Fax: 319-385-3799