



“Libertarian” Gary Johnson Pushes “Free Market” Carbon Tax

Despite a historic opportunity for third parties to do well this presidential election, Libertarian Party candidate Gary Johnson seems determined to blow it. In the equivalent of shooting himself in the political foot, Johnson announced support for a deeply unpopular tax on emissions of carbon dioxide, or CO₂, to stop alleged “climate change.” And he sought to deceive voters while doing it. While the former New Mexico governor framed the tax scheme as a “fee” and a “free-market approach,” even libertarians blasted the deception.



The “fee,” as Johnson referred to his proposed tax in a perfect emulation of ObamaCare-style semantic deception, would massively expand government control over Americans and the economy. At the same time, the scheme would [further enrich crony capitalists such as Goldman Sachs and Al Gore](#), along with the other mega-banks and oil companies pushing for it. The poor and middle class, though, along with freedom and free markets, would suffer a devastating blow from the plan. Even the planet would suffer, according to experts.

Known to [scientists as the gas of life](#), CO₂ is an essential molecule needed for plant life and is exhaled by every person on the planet. Despite being absurdly demonized as “pollution” by extremist politicians and bureaucrats, it is emitted in almost every human activity — from sitting on a couch to driving a car to turning on a light bulb. Human emissions of CO₂, though, appear to be insignificant at best, making up a fraction of one percent of all the “greenhouse gases” in the atmosphere.

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But human CO₂ emissions aren’t insignificant enough for the Libertarian Party’s presidential nominee. Johnson claims to believe the increasingly discredited man-made global-warming theory — a theory that the overwhelming majority of Americans reject in surveys. Aside from public opinion polls, [which show just four in 10 Americans believe the theory](#), the observable evidence — [including some 18 years with no warming](#) and [the failure of basically every prediction](#) — has also demolished the alarmism of the United Nations and other global-warming zealots.

Speaking to the *Juneau Empire’s* editorial board, Johnson [apparently suggested](#) that alleged man-made global warming might [“threaten” Alaska’s beauty in some undetermined way](#). “I do believe that climate change is occurring. I do believe that it is man-caused,” he was quoted as saying by the paper, echoing Obama and Clinton. The Libertarian candidate also said, “There can be and is a free-market approach to climate change.” Incredibly, borrowing from Obama by denying that his tax plot would be a tax, Johnson said he supported a government “fee” imposed on CO₂ emissions, but not a tax.

What difference there might be between a government “fee” and a “tax” was not explained. Nor was it



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immediately clear from Johnson's statements whether CO₂ exhaled during breathing or released when opening a soda can would be taxed. It was also not clear how government extracting wealth from the private sector to battle emissions of the "gas of life" could in any way be considered a "free-market approach" to anything. Real Libertarians ridiculed the idea.

Where such UN-backed carbon tax schemes have been imposed, not only did they distort the market and hurt consumers, but they resulted in the [murder, brutalization, and uprooting of impoverished Africans](#). Massive land grabs to plant trees for European "carbon credits" schemes, [perpetrated with backing from the World Bank, the UN, and the European Union, were so bad that some critics called the process "cultural genocide."](#)

"We as human beings want to see carbon emissions reduced significantly," Johnson claimed, pretending to speak for humanity. In the real world, *The New American* has interviewed more than a dozen of the world's leading scientists in their fields — including many who have served on the UN's "Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change" (IPCC) — who have [celebrated CO₂ emissions as wonderful for people and planet](#). Indeed, more than a few have noted that the planet is currently "starving" for more of the beneficial gas, and that CO₂ has been present in drastically higher concentrations in Earth's past.

"If you talk to most scientists, they will acknowledge that carbon dioxide is not a pollutant," [explained](#) the late Dr. Robert Carter, former chief of the School of Earth Sciences at Australia's internationally renowned James Cook University. "Indeed, it's grotesque to call it a pollutant. It's an abuse of logic, it's an abuse of language, and it's an abuse of science... Carbon dioxide is literally the stuff of life." Noting that farmers pump CO₂ into their greenhouses, Carter called CO₂ emissions and their effects "a huge environmental benefit."

Johnson, for his part, did add some caveats to his support for the global establishment's anti-CO₂, anti-freedom, anti-national sovereignty crusade. For example, he pointed out that the United States only emits 16 percent of what he called the "load" of CO₂. "I don't want to do anything that harms jobs," he claimed, although it is a certainty that government taxes (or fees) on CO₂ would cost jobs, as they have in other nations where they have been imposed. "The rest of the world has to catch up with us," he added, cryptically.

In an earlier interview with the far-left *Los Angeles Times*, Johnson was less deceptive when trying to frame his plot as a "fee" instead of a tax. "I'm open also to the notion of a carbon tax," he was quoted as saying. "That it does have an impact, that it ends up being revenue-neutral. I'm not looking at this as a revenue generator, as much as there are costs associated with, there are health and safety issues with carbon." CO₂ does not cause health or safety issues — again, it is exhaled as you breathe.

Ironically, though, Johnson set himself up to be opposed by basically everyone — including the fringe leftist "green" voters he appears to have been hoping to attract with his support for an unconstitutional carbon tax. Consider that, in Washington State, self-styled environmentalists and climate warriors are [currently fighting against](#) a proposed carbon tax. The reason: It is revenue neutral and so, would not, in theory at least, grow the size, power, burden, or cost of government.

Among Johnson's core supporters, the damage is probably going to be even more severe. Indeed, American Libertarians were quick to lambaste the Libertarian Party nominee over his CO₂ agenda. "It is impossible for a president or legislature to impose a 'free-market' tax (or fee) on anything," [noted](#) Tho



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Bishop at the Libertarian Mises Institute in a piece noting that there is no such thing as a free-market carbon tax. “Considering the explicit goal here would be an attempt to try to use government tax collectors to alter the behavior of carbon-dioxide emitters, it’s difficult to see this as anything but government intervention.”

Abroad, the unpopularity of carbon taxes has been powerful, too. The carbon tax was [so unpopular](#) in liberal Australia — [power bills surged](#), [businesses imploded](#), and [more](#) — that it was promptly repealed by the political candidates who campaigned on killing the tax. Indeed, [that issue alone resulted in a landslide win for the party that promised to repeal the crushing tax](#). It promptly followed through, then warned the UN that Australia [was done accepting “socialism masquerading as environmentalism.”](#)

Before shooting himself in the foot with his plot to tax the gas you exhale, Libertarians and Johnson shot themselves in the other political foot by [selecting a left-wing globalist to serve as the vice-presidential nominee](#). The VP candidate, former Massachusetts Governor William Weld, is a longtime member of the globalist [Council on Foreign Relations](#). Weld is so devoted to surrendering U.S. sovereignty that he even co-chaired the CFR’s pro-North American Union “Independent Task Force on North America.” The architect of the NAU plot, the late Robert Pastor (CFR), blasted The John Birch Society, which publishes this magazine, for derailing the “integration” scheme.

In the interview with the Alaskan newspaper, Johnson did say other things that would likely be pleasing to liberty-minded and constitutionalist voters. For example, he blasted foreign interventionism and “regime change” as a failure. He also suggested that Alaska (and presumably other states) should enjoy more autonomy in running their own affairs, as the U.S. Constitution demands. After touting his “free-market approach” to fleecing taxpayers and consumers for CO₂ emissions, he did claim to support a freer market in healthcare.

Johnson’s positions on alleged man-made global warming and the gas of life, while less radical, [are in line with Democrat nominee Hillary Clinton](#). She has supported [Obama’s lawless pseudo-treaties and decrees on the issue, and vowed to go further](#). The Green Party is even more extreme. But aside from some outraged former Bernie Sanders supporters who refuse to back Clinton, the Greens appear to have little public backing.

By contrast, Donald Trump’s stated views on the issue are more mainstream and in line with the views of the overwhelming majority of Americans who reject the controversial theory. After lambasting the man-made warming theory as a “hoax,” for example, Trump [vowed to “cancel” the UN’s Paris Agreement to shackle humanity under the guise of controlling the climate](#). He also promised to crush the lawless regulations imposed by Obama, although his energy advisor later appeared to tone down some of the pledges.

The Constitution Party, meanwhile, has [been bold in rejecting the climate agenda](#) and the [deadly policies associated with it](#). “We reject ... the argument of the perceived threat of man-made global warming which has been refuted by a large number of scientists,” the pro-Constitution party says on its website. “The globalists are using the global warming threat to gain more control via worldwide sustainable development.”

With both major party candidates turning off a sizable portion of the electorate, the Libertarian Party and other third parties had an unprecedented opportunity this election to make themselves heard and felt. Johnson and his running mate, though, seem determined to squander that historic chance by aligning themselves with the same globalist establishment Americans are in the process of revolting



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against. For Americans who reject climate alarmism and the associated globalist Big Government policies, there are only two options on the 2016 presidential ballot: Trump and the Constitution Party.

Alex Newman is a correspondent for The New American, covering economics, education, politics, and more. Follow him on Twitter [@ALEXNEWMAN_JOU](#). He can be reached at: anewman@thenewamerican.com.

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