



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on May 12, 2014

Rubio Now Cool to Climate-change Legislation

U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) has taken a clear stand against claims of man-made climate change and calls for cap and trade and other measures to curb carbon emissions, long targeted as a major cause of global warming. The likely contender for his party's presidential nomination in 2016 is now cool toward his previous approach to the subject when he was speaker of the Florida House of Representatives in 2009, just one year before his election to the U.S. Senate and the status he has since enjoyed as a rising star of the Grand Old Party.



"I do not believe that human activity is causing these dramatic changes to our climate the way these scientists are portraying it," Rubio said in an interview that aired Sunday on ABC's [This Week](#). Responding to questions about the National Climate Assessment issued from the White House last week with dire warnings about present and near-future consequences of global warming, Rubio added: "I do not believe that the laws that they propose we pass will do anything about it. Except it will destroy our economy."

Such unequivocal statements do not leave the senator much "wobble room" if he should choose to alter that position during a presidential campaign or in a Rubio administration, should he win the top prize. But while there has been no net increase in the Earth's temperature for nearly 18 years, Rubio's former interest in climate-change legislation appeared to cool in little more than a year when he was in the state legislature. [Huffington Post reported](#):

As the leader of the Florida House in 2008, Rubio helped pass a law directing the state Department of Environmental Protection to develop a carbon emissions capping system. He has since distanced himself from that vote, arguing that he never supported cap and trade, only the idea that the state should look into such a system. And when the system ultimately did not pass, he cheered its failure.

The "HuffPost" piece provides a link to a December 10, 2009 article in the *Tampa Bay Times* with the headline: "Rubio now assails cap-and-trade plan, though he backed earlier legislation." Rubio highlighted the issue in his senate campaign against Charlie Crist, a fellow Republican and the Florida governor at the time.

"U.S. Senate candidate Marco Rubio is hammering rival Charlie Crist's 'cap-and trade scheme,' though he voted for a bill backed by the governor requiring state officials to devise such a plan," the paper reported. Rubio said at the time that his position hadn't changed on cap and trade, a program of emission caps that allows companies to buy and sell unused portions of their respective quotas. The law's requirement that the plan gain the approval of the Republican-led legislature guaranteed the bill would not become law, he said. Environmentalists who lobbied for the bill were not buying that explanation, calling Rubio "disingenuous" or worse.

"Rubio is a total flip-flopper," Gerald Karnas, Florida director of the Environmental Defense Fund, said



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at the time. “Under his leadership, progressive energy legislation passed the House.”

Crist later dropped out of the Republican primary and ran for Senate as an independent, finishing a distant second to Rubio, a Tea Party favorite, in the November 2010 election. Democrat Kendrick Meek came in third. But Rubio’s evolution on environmental and energy legislation has apparently undergone several mutations. In 2007, he penned an opinion piece in the *Miami Herald* citing a study that claimed emission caps would increase utility bills to consumers by an estimated 25 percent to 50 percent. Rubio advocated instead tax incentives for energy-efficient companies and investments in ethanol and other biofuels.

Government “investment” in ethanol is a policy favored neither by environmentalists nor advocates of a free-market economy. The federal mandate for ethanol production has been widely criticized for both increasing corn crops on acreage previously set aside, and for diverting crop production to fuel, thereby increasing the cost of food.

Rubio’s current stand on climate change and cap and trade runs counter to pronouncements trumpeted daily in the major media about the disaster that looms from uncapped carbon emissions. Indeed, Miami and Tampa are two of the cities most threatened by rising tides and increased flooding from the Earth’s warming, according to the latest National Climate Assessment. But not all of the nation’s scientists subscribe to the doomsday scenario, as [Newsmax.com](#) reported over the weekend. Dr. Judith Curry of the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at the Georgia Institute of Technology said the report “effectively implies that there is no climate change other than what is caused by humans, and that extreme weather events are equivalent to climate change.” More misleading than the report itself, she said, is “the spin being put on this by the Obama administration.”

“There is no fingerprint of human-caused versus naturally-caused climate change,” insists Dr. Roy Spencer, principal research scientist at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Weather Channel co-founder John Coleman called the report a “litany of doom,” and a “total distortion of the data and an agenda-driven, destructive episode of bad science gone berserk.” Mark Morano, who offered a roundup of reactions to the global-warming report on his Climate Depot website, disparaged reports of global warming as the cause of extreme weather conditions. “By every measure,” Morano said, “so-called extreme weather is showing no trend or declining trends on 50-100-year timescales. Droughts, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes are not increasing due to man-made global warming.”

“Why does the report now call ‘global warming’ a new name, so-called ‘climate disruption’?” Morano asks. “Simple answer: Due to earth’s failure to warm — no global warming for nearly 18 years — another name was necessary to attempt to gin up fear.”

“Our climate is always changing,” Rubio said in his *This Week* interview. The senator’s position on the issue appears to undergo frequent changes as well. His current stand should play well with Republican primary voters, who will likely take it as a sign that a President Rubio would be flatly opposed to caps on carbon emissions and other climate-related legislation that would be damaging to the economy. But voters with long memories may recall that President Richard Nixon was similarly opposed to wage and price controls — until he imposed them in a bogus attempt to rein in inflation.

By at least some accounts, the Earth does a better job of adapting to climate change than politicians do when adapting to changes in opinion polls.



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