

March 26, 2015

The Honorable Raul Grijalva
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
329 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Grijalva:

We the undersigned are writing with regard to letters you recently sent to seven academic institutions that currently employ faculty who have challenged the widely accepted state of climate science and the disruptive role human activity is having on climate systems.

While all our organizations support the widely accepted state of climate research, we want to express concern with what appears, on its face, to be an overly broad inquiry for financial records and other files associated with the aforementioned faculty. Unsubstantiated political interrogation of researchers threatens to chill the very nature of the scientific process. We appreciate your subsequent efforts to limit the inquiry as such a broad inquiry potentially threatens scientific research and the ability of scientists to express differing views on scientific and technical topics. However, there is still an additional danger in singling out a group of researchers based on the nature of their opinions or views.

Without question, scientists have an obligation to provide comprehensive, transparent, unbiased, and understandable technical analyses of topics they are studying and fully disclose their funding sources in accordance with existing policies. Because each of the faculty you are inquiring about has testified at least once before the U.S. Congress, we fully support your effort to ensure that each made a full and accurate disclosure as to any potential conflict(s) of interest they may have had, if any. Failure to make such disclosures is not only intellectually dishonest but undermines the validity and credibility of the scientific enterprise. However, we strongly feel that any extra steps taken to validate the transparency of congressional witnesses should be applied to all individuals from specific committees or hearings unless there is a legitimate reason to treat a subgroup differently.

If you should see that any of the undersigned may provide additional thoughts regarding our organization's efforts to promote ethical scientific discourse, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

American Anthropological Association
American Chemical Society
American Society of Agronomy
The Council of Scientific Society Presidents

Crop Science Society of America
Geological Society of America
Soil Science Society of America