

Climate changes, Republicans deny

Letter to the editor, [Brunswick Beacon](#), 09.07.23

For the 10.5 million folks living in North Carolina, climate change is undeniable. Once considered by some to affect only “coastal elites” with beachfront homes, climate change is hammering us all with higher temperatures, higher humidity, stronger storms, heavier rains (and with more severe droughts), and greater risks of wildfires.

Recognizing that our reliance on fossil fuel energy is contributing to the problem, Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order 80 in 2018, “North Carolina’s Commitment to Address Climate Change and Transition to a Clean Energy Economy.” The 2025 goals included 40% reductions in greenhouse gases, increases in electric vehicle use, and reduction in energy use in state buildings. The Order also established the North Carolina Climate Change Interagency Council.

North Carolina is ideally suited to climate change mitigation leadership. We’re home to outstanding colleges and universities and prominent corporations committed to climate goals. We have a robust workforce ready to be trained for the green jobs of tomorrow. We’re ideally situated for solar and wind power facilities.

What’s keeping us from reaching our potential? MAGA Republican legislators, still denying that human-caused climate change is real. Perhaps their fossil fuel lovefest is driven by campaign donations, like Senator Ted Budd who accepted the maximum legal donation from an oil industry lobbyist one day before voting against the Consumer Fuel Price Gouging Protection Act. Nothing personal, just business.

As Republicans deny, we fry. Heat-related health impacts soar. Extreme storms cause livestock and crop losses; commercial fishing and aquaculture suffer. Transportation, water, and wastewater infrastructure and our electrical grid cannot withstand climate change stresses.

North Carolina has the skills needed to meet these challenges. However, until we vote out the MAGA Republican obstructionists, we’ll suffer even more serious harm to our health, finances, and way of life.

Rich Cooper
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