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Rep. Steve Womack  
Ranking Member

## Ranking Member Steve Womack (R-AR) Opening Remarks at Hearing on Climate Change

*As Submitted For The Record:*

Thank you, Chairman Yarmuth, for holding this hearing. I look forward to the testimony and debate on this important topic.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, we cannot have a discussion about how to address climate change without looking at the leading solution proposed by your side of the aisle: the Green New Deal, which has been sponsored by almost 100 of our Democratic colleagues and adopted as a centerpiece of the progressive agenda.

This is now the second hearing we have held featuring solutions with more government control and less freedom for Americans.

Last month, we held a hearing on imposing a one-size-fits-all, single-payer health care system, as Democrats' Medicare-for-All proposal would do. Now we're having a hearing on the Green New Deal.

I'm looking forward to learning what's next on our docket.

Since we are on the Budget Committee – and we have a responsibility first and foremost to consider the dangers of growing our nation's debt – let's start by looking at the cost of the Green New Deal.

According to a former Congressional Budget Office director, the Green New Deal is projected to cost \$93 trillion over ten years. This figure is more than four-and-a-half times what our nation's GDP was in 2018.

What does that enormous price tag mean for a family of four in my district?

About \$60,000 in higher costs and bigger taxes each year. To put that number in perspective, that's just under the median household income in the United States, which is less than \$61,500 a year.

Just like our hearing last month, I look forward to learning from many of the Green New Deal co-sponsors about how they plan to pay for a \$93-trillion proposal. If you're a believer in Modern Monetary Theory, you may not think we need to pay for it at all – a concerning position to take when you're supposed to be managing our debt.

With the stated goal of fully transitioning away from fossil fuels and nuclear power, the Green New Deal includes: establishing complete renewable electricity generation; mandating zero-emission passenger vehicles by 2030; making every building in the country energy efficient; and transitioning to high-speed trains, which would essentially eliminate air travel.

Not only will these policies fundamentally change how Americans heat and cool their homes, commute to work, and travel across the country or around the world. They will also substantially increase energy costs – harming low-income families the most – and end millions of jobs across the economy, including those in the energy, manufacturing, transportation, and agriculture sectors.

Workers across the country are starting to raise red flags over how the Green New Deal will impact their jobs. They recognize that this level of government interference threatens their ability to make a living and provide for their families.

What you are not likely to hear from my colleagues across the aisle is that the United States is leading the world in reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

In fact, in 2017, carbon emissions were the lowest they have been since 1992 – not because of government regulations, but because of the ingenuity of our local communities and businesses.

As the architects of the Green New Deal wrote in an FAQ handout, this proposal is “a massive transformation of our society.”

How many of our constituents really want this radical upheaval of their lives? Especially when you consider the fact that our country cannot effectively address climate change alone. Reducing greenhouse-gas emissions is a global issue.

Congress should focus on policies that build on our progress – not sweeping overhauls of our economy that would stifle competition and innovation, add trillions of dollars to our nation’s debt, and fail to achieve our shared objective: protecting the environment.

We should continue efforts to break down regulatory barriers that stand in the way of developing more energy-efficient, cost-effective technology. We should encourage investments in carbon capture, renewable hydropower, safe nuclear power, and energy storage. And we should continue to promote research into these renewable sources.

It is my hope that we can work together on market-based solutions that make clean energy more affordable and reliable, create jobs, and address climate change.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.