



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on May 16, 2016

Pressure Builds on Prosecutors Persecuting Climate Skeptics

Oops! The [climate-alarmist movement](#) and its [armed enforcers](#) have egg all over their face, [again](#). After being warned that they [may be breaking federal laws prohibiting criminal conspiracies against constitutionally protected rights](#), the state prosecutors persecuting skeptics of man-made global-warming alarmism are under growing national pressure to respect the rule of law, and the First Amendment in particular. Among other developments, one of the think-tanks being harassed is asking the federal judiciary to slap the Virgin Islands attorney general with a fine for his attack on free speech. More moderate state attorneys general, meanwhile, have also joined the fray, calling the probe of energy giant ExxonMobil and other targets a “fishing expedition of the worst kind” in a lawsuit aimed at stopping the “ideologically motivated” scheme.



The effort to use the legal process to seek out information that might incriminate climate skeptics formally began last year, when New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman (shown) [announced](#) the subpoena of Exxon. However, official documents revealed that the effort actually began years earlier, when Rockefeller dynasty-funded climate alarmists met with far-left officials to strategize on how to wage war against the energy industry, as well as against voices that disagreed with their increasingly discredited theories on climate change. In late March, the contours of the half-baked legal strategy were made clear. Standing alongside climate profiteer and alarmist guru Al Gore, Schneiderman and other prosecutors [announced that over a dozen alarmist state attorneys general were forming a coalition they dubbed “AGs United for Clean Power,”](#) apparently a reference to the [Obama administration’s unconstitutional “Clean Power” decrees](#). The goal: to see if they could prosecute those who disagree.

However, things started going badly almost as soon as the AGs announced their coalition’s agenda in New York City at a well-attended press conference. First, the infamous “Gore Effect” showed up, with record cold that tends to follow Gore around striking New York State right after the announcement of the anti-skeptic Inquisition. Then, documents exposed the prosecutors’ behind-the-scenes collaboration with establishment-funded “green” activists to target their political enemies via the legal system. Eventually, legal experts and even a respected law professor reminded the state prosecutors — in top establishment media outlets, no less — that conspiracy to deprive people of rights, including the unalienable right to free speech protected by the First Amendment, [can result in serious criminal and](#)



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[civil penalties](#). Even prominent climate alarmists expressed shock over the prosecutors' lawless efforts to intimidate, harass, and silence those who disagree with them.

Now, things are getting even worse for the "Clean Power" AGs and their [Lysenkoism-style campaign](#). The non-partisan Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI), one of numerous public policy groups in the prosecutors' crosshairs in the fishing expedition, [received a subpoena](#) for a decade's worth of e-mails surrounding its work on climate. The move sparked a national outcry, even among climate alarmists, over what was widely perceived to be a blatant and illegal attack on the First Amendment-protected rights of Americans. That assault was leveled by U.S. Virgin Islands Attorney General Claude Walker, a pseudo-environmentalist anti-oil crusader and junior player in the alliance of alarmist prosecutors hoping to silence skeptics. His biggest claim to fame appears to be shaking down another oil company for money to put in a slush fund.

With his subpoena of the non-profit group, however, Walker may have bitten off more than he bargained for. Already, Walker's agency sent an e-mail to CEI noting that it planned to abandon the effort to force the group to hand over its materials, including donor information — at least for now. But CEI, which responded early on by vowing to fight, is still not backing down. Instead, it [asked](#) the District of Columbia Superior Court to fine AG Walker for violating the organization's First Amendment-protected rights under D.C.'s Anti-SLAPP law. The group is also seeking attorneys' fees and other sanctions, saying that the Virgin Islands attorney general never should have issued the subpoena to begin with, and that the constitutional damage he inflicted needed to be set right.

In comments to the media, officials with the organization blasted Walker for defying the U.S. Constitution's protections for free speech, and said that the courts should hold him accountable. "Mr. Walker's attempt to silence us and others who share our views is an unconstitutional abomination," declared CEI President Kent Lassman in a statement. "CEI will not sit still with this illegal threat hanging over our head, which is why we are asking the court to fine AG Walker and end his abuse of the legal process to intimidate CEI." [Other non-profit organizations](#) skeptical of climate alarmism were also targeted by the group of attorneys general.

CEI General Counsel Sam Kazman, meanwhile, noted that Walker's letter announcing the decision to withdraw the subpoena, for now, was not good enough. "Attorney General Walker's subpoena of us is an outrageous violation of our First Amendment rights, and its sole purpose is to shut down debate," Kazman said. "Mr. Walker's statement that he will end his D.C. court action, but may launch a new one whenever the mood strikes him, is the height of arrogance and demonstrates that he still doesn't recognize the harm he has unlawfully inflicted."

Lawmen are also taking action. Numerous moderate state attorneys general have already spoken out against their fellow state AGs for the witch hunt against climate skeptics. Now, at least two are taking more concrete action, filing a brief in Texas court against the Virgin Islands AG and his antics. "General Walker's investigation appears to be driven by ideology, and not law, as demonstrated not only by his collusion with [a law firm he contracted to help], but also by his request for almost four decades worth of material from a company with no business operations, employees, or assets in the Virgin Islands," wrote Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton and Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange in the [May 16 filing](#). Exxon's principal offices are in Texas.

In a [public statement](#), Paxton slammed Walker and his efforts, too. "This case is about abusing the power of the subpoena to force Exxon to turn over many decades' worth of records, so an attorney general with an agenda can pore over them in hopes of finding something incriminating," he said. "It's a



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fishing expedition of the worst kind, and represents an effort to punish Exxon for daring to hold an opinion on climate change that differs from that of radical environmentalists.... The First Amendment ensures that all people are free to hold opinions and promote them in public debate. This action by the Virgin Islands' AG could effectively set a precedent that anyone can be criminally investigated because of their stated opinions."

Of course, Exxon deserves little sympathy from Americans — the [overwhelming majority of whom do not even believe the man-made global-warming theory](#) or its oftentimes vicious promoters, described by [top climate experts as a "cult"](#) and even "[global warming Nazis](#)." In addition to being a corporate member of the [global-government-promoting Council on Foreign Relations](#), Exxon, along with other Big Oil giants, has been loudly demanding since at least 2009 that already-struggling taxpayers pay a "carbon tax." It has also been a cheerleader for [empowering the United Nations dictators club under the guise of "climate change."](#) Still, while skeptics and competitors may relish watching alarmist Exxon being persecuted and extorted by rogue prosecutors, the harm done to the First Amendment and constitutionally protected liberties of Americans must be resisted. Exxon may be in the crosshairs today, but if Americans do not speak out, anybody could be next.

Photo of New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman: AP Images

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