



Written by [James Murphy](#) on April 4, 2024

Watchdog Group Seeks Answers on Biden Administration's Secretive Climate Data

Government watchdog group Protect the Public's Trust (PPT) [wants](#) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to open its books regarding its "Billions Project," which purports to track all climate-related disasters in the United States that cost over a billion dollars. The [project](#) is often cited by the Biden administration in their push to deprive Americans of fossil fuels, which climate zealots claim are heating the Earth and leading to out-of-control climate change.

The project administered by NOAA claims that "the U.S. has sustained 377 weather and climate disasters since 1980 where overall damages/costs reached or exceeded \$1 billion" (cost-adjusted to today's dollars). Though NOAA claims that it gleans its billion-dollar disaster (BDD) data from over a dozen sources, PPT asserts that the federal weather watchers are secretive about those sources and do not disclose how individual weather events supposedly reach that billion-dollar threshold.

"American families and businesses continue to struggle with persistently high inflation, which many attribute in large part to the energy policies and government spending of the current administration. The idea that blatant violations of scientific integrity could be underlying the rationale for these policies should concern every American," PPT's director Michael Chamberlain told The Daily Caller.

"Unfortunately, this is far from an isolated incident. The Biden Administration came into office pledging that its decision making would be grounded in the highest-quality science, but all too often has failed to live up to those promises."

In a [complaint](#) to the Commerce Department, under which NOAA operates, Chamberlain lays out PPT's concerns with the Billions Project.

"Though cited as evidence of climate change effects, the Billions Project does not utilize climate data," the letter stated. "The Project's dataset only collects and reports economic data about disaster losses. Because of this, it cannot distinguish the effect of climate change as a factor on disaster losses from the effect of human factors like increases in the vulnerability and exposure of people and wealth to disaster damages due to population and economic growth."

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The cost adjustments for inflation were also a source of consternation for PPT.

The letter noted that “while the Project adjusted the dollar amount of damages for events in the database for inflation, it only included events that crossed the billion-dollar threshold in the year they occurred. This resulted in an apples-to-oranges comparison over time, as inflation effectively lowered the threshold for initial inclusion in the database over time.”

Even NOAA seemed to understand the error, as in 2012 they warned that caution “should be used in interpreting any trends based on this graphic for a variety of reasons.”

Yet, the Biden administration repeatedly uses the BDD data as proof that climate change is intensifying and making weather disasters worse.

“Sensational climate claims made without proper scientific basis and spread by government officials threaten the public’s trust in its scientific officials and undermines the government’s mission of stewarding the environment,” the complaint stated. “It also poses the danger of policymakers basing consequential government policy on unscientific claims unsupported by evidence.”

PPT has been at the forefront of questioning the Biden administration’s sometimes secretive manner when addressing climate change. The group has been outspoken regarding Biden’s Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry’s [secretive](#) nature in performing his duties. When Kerry resigned, PPT also decried the decision to [name](#) longtime Democratic “fixer” John Podesta as his replacement in a modified role.

In the climate-change debate, scientific integrity and honesty are far less important than forwarding the narrative, which appears to be PPT’s point.

“The American public has every right to expect, even demand, that the scientific research funded by their tax dollars is conducted under the most rigorous standards of integrity, transparency, and quality,” Chamberlain said. “This is especially true when that research is used to underpin decisions that affect nearly every aspect of their lives — from the cars they drive, to the foods they eat, to how those foods are prepared.”

Chamberlain concluded: “If the federal government ever hopes to reclaim even a sliver of the trust it has lost in recent years, ensuring that these sorts of projects live up to their ideals is imperative.”



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