



## Elizabeth Warren Misrepresents Koch Investments in Higher Education

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Democratic Party presidential hopeful Sen. Elizabeth Warren (Mass.) has a long history of criticizing Charles Koch and his brother David (the latter has since retired from political activism a year ago) as a part of the problem of impeding a host of political issues.

Last week, Warren specifically blamed Koch's political network for stymieing efforts to combat climate change, according to the [Washington Examiner](#).

Warren was attending an event in Iowa when she made the remarks, which event came on the heels of her unveiling of a rural economic stimulus plan. The event focused on agricultural issues, as Iowa is reliant on the agricultural industry, and how the various actors (i.e. the federal government and land grant universities and colleges) could conduct research to improve innovation within the agricultural industry.

She claimed Koch thwarted research into sustainable farming practices through investment of grant funds and other means in higher education. She said, "It's basically just one more turn of corruption, right?" Warren said, blaming corporations and wealthy individuals like Koch for interfering in research.

"There were some good funders...But they were the ones who had an agenda, right? The ones who don't believe in climate science, the ones who want to support Big Ag, right? The ones who want to do pharma that helps Big Pharma, right?"

Warren also quoted a farmer whom she had spoken to earlier, "He said there's just a twist in all of the research, and that in turn gets felt everywhere else in the system," which reinforced her point of the Koch network's alleged interference in research.

However, Warren misrepresented Koch's investments in higher education. Many of the Koch network's investments in higher education expand beyond agricultural research. Other subjects which the network invests in are centered around free-market economics, entrepreneurship, economic opportunity, criminal justice reform, and philosophy. The Washington Examiner correctly pointed out its investments in free-market economic academics, such as at Virginia's George Mason University and the non-profit organization Cato Institute, but the majority of mainstream media outlets neglect to mention the full breadth of higher education investments.

Also, Warren's criticism of the Koch network is misplaced as the network has pivoted to bipartisanship from explicitly supporting Republican politics within the past year. The network now emphasizes the bipartisan issue of criminal justice reform, illustrated by [their push](#) for the passage of the First Step Act, and once paid for a [digital advertisement](#) thanking then-Democratic Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-North Dakota) in the 2018 midterm cycle.