



Obama's CO2 Plan Will Only Avert 0.001 Degree Of Warming A Year

By Michael Bastasch

March 31, 2015

President Barack Obama formally submitted his plan to cut U.S. carbon dioxide emissions to the U.N. Tuesday and a climate scientist has already pointed out a glaring problem: The plan will have virtually no impact on global temperatures.

Obama's carbon dioxide reduction plan commits the U.S. to 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025 — a promise he made last year to secure a pledge from China to reduce its own emissions.

But Obama's plan will only avert 0.001 degrees Celsius of global temperature rises a year, according to climate scientist Chip Knappenberger with the libertarian Cato Institute.

Knappenberger notes that Obama's climate plan mirrors a scenario where the U.S. reduces carbon dioxide emissions 80 percent by 2050. Using this assumption, Knappenberger calculates that only about one-tenth of a degree of temperature rise will be averted by 2100. This breaks down to about a one-thousandth of a degree of averted temperature rise every year over the next century.

The cost? It's not clear, but EPA regulations aimed at cutting carbon dioxide emissions from the energy sector is projected to cost as much as \$8.8 billion a year based on agency figures. Other studies put the cost much higher — a NERA study found the costs would be \$41 billion per year.

Republicans have protested Obama's recently unveiled climate plan, saying that it would be impossible for the U.S. to make such deep cuts to CO2 emissions.

“Even if the job-killing and likely illegal Clean Power Plan were fully implemented, the United States could not meet the targets laid out in this proposed new plan,” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky said in a statement.

“Considering that two-thirds of the U.S. federal government hasn’t even signed off on the Clean Power Plan and 13 states have already pledged to fight it, our international partners should proceed with caution before entering into a binding, unattainable deal,” McConnell said.

Democrats have backed Obama’s plan to reduce emissions. The White House says this plan will galvanize international support behind a global climate treaty — one they plan to impose without congressional approval.

“This ambitious target is grounded in intensive analysis of cost-effective carbon pollution reductions achievable under existing law and will keep the United States on the pathway to achieve deep economy-wide reductions of 80 percent or more by 2050,” according to the White House.

“The Administration’s steady efforts to reduce emissions will deliver ever-larger carbon pollution reductions, public health improvements, and consumer savings over time and provide a firm foundation to meet the new U.S. target,” the White House says.

International diplomats are preparing for a U.N. climate summit in Paris later this year. Delegates are expected to agree to a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol, but it’s unclear if this agreement will have more teeth than Kyoto did.