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Official DOE account tweets praise for Rick Perry's 'fight' against climate scientists

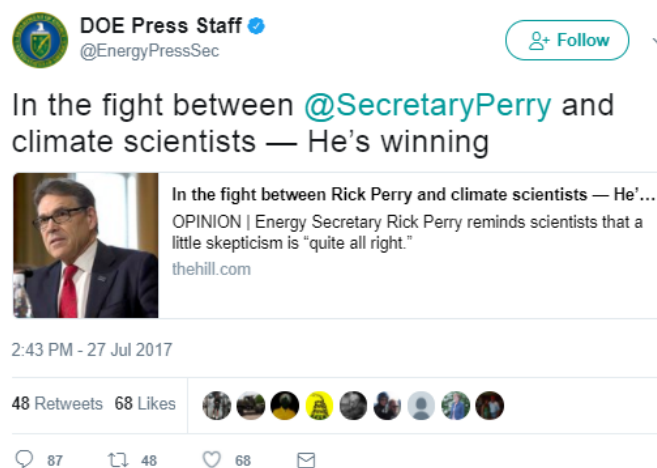
The department is already facing criticism for an op-ed Perry wrote criticizing the Affordable Care Act.

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The Department of Energy's official press Twitter account apparently wants you to know two things: that there is a fight going on between climate scientists and Secretary of Energy Rick Perry, and that Perry is supposedly winning.

At least that was the message sent out Thursday, when the department's press office tweeted an [op-ed published in The Hill](#) by Ross McKittrick, a professor of economics at the University of Guelph and an Adjunct Scholar at the Cato Institute.



McKittrick, like Perry, does not accept the mainstream scientific consensus on climate change. In the op-ed, McKittrick primarily takes aim at the American Meteorological Society (AMS), which [sent a letter](#) to Perry in late June protesting his [remarks on CNBC](#); in the interview, Perry claimed that carbon dioxide is not a primary contributor to climate change. That claim blatantly contradicts the scientific consensus on climate change, and the AMS wanted Perry to understand that "emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are the primary cause" of global warming.

The Department of Energy's tweet is hardly the first time an official government communications channel has shared misleading information about climate change under the Trump administration. In January, the official House Science Committee Twitter account posted a Breitbart article claiming that global temperatures had plunged; the article looked only at land temperatures, which climate scientists agree are neither an accurate nor complete measure of Earth's actual warming.

But the Energy Department is already under increased scrutiny this week over charges that the department misused taxpayer funds by promoting an op-ed criticizing the Affordable Care Act, written by Perry, through its official social media channels. On Wednesday, Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ) wrote a letter to the Government Accountability Office asking for an investigation into whether the department had improperly used funds in promoting the op-ed.

The Department of Energy subsequently deleted the tweet promoting Perry's op-ed. As of Thursday afternoon, however, the tweet promoting McKittrick's op-ed was still on the department's Twitter feed.

The Energy Department employs climate scientists at many of its national laboratories. In December, the Trump transition team asked the department for names of employees that had done work on either international or national climate policy, fueling concerns that the administration was preparing for a purge of climate scientists. The department refused the request, and the Trump administration subsequently dropped the matter.