



Rep. Waxman wants GOP chairman to probe climate skeptic's industry funding

By Ben Geman - 01/24/11 01:39 PM ET

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), the top Democrat on the Energy and Commerce Committee, is urging committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-Mich.) to probe whether a high-profile climate skeptic misled the panel about how much the petroleum industry funds his work.

In a [letter to Upton](#) Monday, Waxman urges Upton to help him explore how much the petroleum industry backs [Dr. Patrick Michaels](#), a scholar with the conservative Cato Institute who [testified before the committee](#) about climate change in 2009.

“I am writing you about his testimony because it now appears that in both the materials he initially submitted to the Committee and in response to questions for the record submitted by a Committee member after the hearing, Dr. Michaels may have provided misleading information about the sources of his funding and his ties to industries opposed to regulation of emissions responsible for climate change,” Waxman writes in his letter to Upton.

Waxman’s letter cites the curriculum vitae that Michaels submitted to the committee with his 2009 testimony, which attributes just a small percentage of his funding to energy industry sources.

Waxman then contrasts this to “publicly available” information showing “substantial” financial support from industry-linked groups.

The letter also notes an [appearance by Michaels](#) on CNN last year in which he was asked about what percentage of his work is funded by the petroleum industry. “I don’t know. Forty percent? I don’t know,” Michaels said on the CNN program.

Politico flagged and provided a link to the interview earlier this month. Waxman’s letter notes that, “It is difficult to reconcile what Dr. Michaels reported to the Committee on his CV with the estimate of his industry funding.”

Waxman wants Upton to join him in asking Michaels to meet with committee staff to clarify the sources of his funding.

Waxman’s letter comes ahead of committee hearings on EPA’s climate rules, and Upton has also vowed efforts to block the regulations.

Michaels is a Ph.D climatologist who is also a distinguished senior fellow in the School of Public Policy at George Mason University.

Michaels has alleged that models showing catastrophic human-induced global warming are overblown, and questioned the scientific foundation of EPA's planned greenhouse gas rules.

Source:

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/677-e2-wire/139693-waxman-urges-upton-to-probe-climate-skeptics-industry-funding>

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