



California Prepares to Throw Climate-Change Skeptics In Jail. Meanwhile, They Allow Violent Criminals To Go Free.

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If you have doubts about the truth of climate change, don't voice them in California or be prepared to ante up thousands of dollars, or, if you don't pay up, serve jail time.

That's the near-future imagined by **Senate Bill 1161**, or the California Climate Science Truth and Accountability Act of 2016, which was up for a vote on Thursday after it wedged its way through Senate committees in April and May.

If the bill passes, state and local prosecutors could sue companies for expressing skepticism over climate change, citing that as a violation of California's Unfair Competition Law [UCL].

The bill reads:

Notwithstanding Section 17208 of the Business and Professions Code, an action pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 17200) of Part 2 of Division 7 of the Business and Professions Code against a corporation, firm, partnership, joint stock company, association, or other organization of persons that has directly or indirectly engaged in unfair competition, as defined in Section 17200 of the Business and Professions Code, with respect to scientific evidence regarding the existence, extent, or current or future impacts of anthropogenic-induced climate change that would otherwise be barred as of January 1, 2017, solely because the statute of limitation has or had expired, is revived and, in that case, the action may be commenced within four years of January 1, 2017. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to alter the applicable limitation period of an action that is not time barred as of January 1, 2017.

The **Washington Times** reports that California's Senate Rules Committee's floor analysis reads: "This bill explicitly authorizes district attorneys and the Attorney General to pursue UCL claims alleging that a business or organization has directly or indirectly engaged in unfair competition with respect to scientific evidence regarding the existence, extent, or current or future impacts of anthropogenic induced climate change." The floor analysis cites InsideClimate News and the Columbia Journalism School's Energy and Environmental Reporting Project's accusations that ExxonMobil has buried its research on climate change; Exxon Mobil has denied the charge. The

floor analysis states, “By extending the statute of limitations, California has the opportunity to hold these companies fully accountable for their actions.”

Stephen Frank, editor of the conservative California Political Review, called SB 1161 a “totalitarian statement by Democrats that the First Amendment is now dead.” He **wrote** on May 31:

Did you donate to the Pacific Legal Foundation? Do you support Americans for Prosperity? Are you a member of the California Republican Party, which has a platform approving of all forms of energy, including fossil fuel (oil)? Do you work for a gas station, an oil company, have your written a letter to the editor in favor of oil drilling? If so, you could find yourself with being charged in a court of law, thanks to SB 1161.

With typical leftist high dudgeon, SB 1161 asserts, “There is broad scientific consensus that anthropogenic global warming is occurring and changing the world’s climate patterns, and that the primary cause is the emission of greenhouse gases from the production and combustion of fossil fuels, such as coal, oil, and natural gas.”

Walter Olson of the website Overlawyered **slammed** SB 1161, writing:

Combined with the plans laid by California Attorney General Kamala Harris — part of the alliance of AGs that has sought to investigate not only oil, gas, and coal companies, but private advocacy groups and university scientists who have played a role in what is characterized as ‘climate denial’— the bill would begin laying the legal groundwork for an astonishingly broad campaign of inquisition and, potentially, expropriation.

Meanwhile, the state has let some criminals who have committed acts of domestic violence go free, as *The Los Angeles Times* **reported** in August 2014.

California: Beat your wife, go have a burger. Question climate change, though, and look out.