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## EPA: Carbon emissions reduction has little impact on climate change

By Dave Boyer

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When President Obama announced new fuel standards for trucks last week, he said the initiative would cut the harmful carbon pollution responsible for climate change.

But even the government says such action won't put a dent in global warming.

The EPA's so-called "temperature change calculator," which shows how reducing carbon emissions would affect climate change, indicates that a doubling of fuel economy in trucks by 2018 would have virtually no impact on rising temperatures. Analysts at the Cato Institute's Center for the Study of Science said the government calculator shows that even reducing total U.S. carbon emissions to zero this year would prevent global temperatures from rising by only 0.2 degrees by the year 2100.

"Any policy that the U.S. does that purports to be climatically important, in fact is not," said Patrick Michaels, director of the center.

The EPA says its vehicle greenhouse gas rules already in place will save consumers \$1.7 trillion at the pump by 2025, and will eliminate six billion metric tons of carbon pollution. When Mr. Obama visited a trucking distribution center in Upper Marlboro, Md., last week, he called the administration's new proposed rules on fuel efficiency a "win-win-win" situation.

"Improving gas mileage for these trucks are going to drive down our oil imports even further," Mr. Obama said. "That reduces carbon pollution even more, [and] cuts down on businesses' fuel costs, which should pay off in lower prices for consumers. You've got three wins."

Critics say while higher fuel economy likely will reduce oil imports, selling the initiative as beneficial to climate change is an especially weak argument. Daniel Simmons, director of regulatory and state affairs at the Institute for Energy Research, pointed to climate change projections by the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that undermine the administration's position.

"According to the U.N., it's a global issue, and reducing even something as large as U.S. truck emissions will have no appreciable impact," Mr. Simmons said.

Reducing carbon emissions has other benefits, including public health, because the sources of carbon dioxide pollution usually emit other harmful particulates. The European Commission has proposed drastic cuts in carbon emissions because, in part, of the expected reduction in the incidence of respiratory and cardiac disease.

Mr. Simmons said the administration's proposed rule for trucks won't lower transportation costs in the U.S.

"The rule will hurt people that have to buy trucks," he said. "And it will be harmful for everyone because it will increase the cost of transportation. This rule will increase the cost of buying semi trucks and other large trucks. The fleet operators know about fuel efficiency and they are doing what they can. To suggest that these guys cannot make a rational calculation about energy efficiency is foolish and naive and just plain wrong. If they could do it for cheap, they'd be doing it right now."

Companies with trucking fleets are already eyeing innovations to travel cheaper with options such as natural gas, which is now plentiful in the U.S., Mr. Michaels said.

"It doesn't matter in terms of greenhouse-effects savings," he said. "The president can say, 'Look, we're reducing our emissions,' and yes, we are. But we're doing it because we found a way to be more efficient, because it's just good economics. It had nothing to do with saving the planet from carbon dioxide emissions."