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Climate change advocate sues over rejection of his work

BY [LARRY CLIFTON](#)

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[Pittsburgh](#) - Michael Mann, a professor of meteorology at Pennsylvania State University, is suing a conservative leaning DC policy center for libel after it published its opinion about his work on global warming/climate change.

News outlets, advocacy groups and associated think tanks have come out [against the lawsuit](#) as trampling on the rights of a free press.

On Monday, The Reporters Committee for the Freedom of the Press -- along with 26 other groups including The Washington Post, Bloomberg and Fox News -- filed an "amici curiae," or "friend of the court," brief with the D.C. Court of Appeals. An amici curiae is a brief submitted to a court to raise additional points of view to sway a court's decision.

"While Mann essentially claims that he can silence critics because he is 'right,' the judicial system should not be the arbiter of either scientific truth or correct public policy," the brief states, adding that "a participant in the 'rough-and-tumble' of public debate should not be able to use a lawsuit like this to silence his critics, regardless of whether one agrees with Mann or defendants."

For his part, Mann filed the suit after Rand Simberg at the Competitive Enterprise Institute wrote a piece referring to Mann as "the Jerry Sandusky of climate science" because he "molested and tortured data in the service of politicized science."

The libel suit is seen by many as a way for climate change advocates to silence opposition to their ideas and theories. But potential for squelching such public debate has united think tanks and institutions who see the libel suit as being unconstitutional. The CATO Institute, Reason Foundation, Individual Rights Foundation and Goldwater Institute all filed their own briefs in support of CEU and National Review.

"Public figures must not be allowed to use the courts to muzzle their critics," Cato's Ilya Shapiro wrote on the group's website earlier this week.

Recently, scientific investigations on Global Warming, now called Climate Change, have produced confusing and often conflicting data. Some [theories have Earth cooling](#) over the past few thousand years while others have it warming.

For the most part, specific theories of the cause and effect of climate change on the Earth's surface over the last 10,000 years are largely based on scientific speculations that [vary greatly from one scientific study to the next](#).