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Anti-climate change campaigning all comes together

November 5, 2009 4:39pm by [Kate Mackenzie](#)

Will Americans for Prosperity, which is campaigning against climate change legislation, succeed where the American Petroleum Institute failed?

AFP (or the Americans for Prosperity Foundation, to which it is closely affiliated) has been waging a [high profile battle](#) against both of the climate change bills proposed in US Congress this year. Last week they targeted Republican Senator Lindsay Graham of South Carolina for co-authoring an editorial supporting the Boxer-Kerry bill. That bill would target a 20 per cent reduction on CO2 emissions from 2005 levels by 2020.

From the FT:

The group was instrumental in organising the febrile opposition to healthcare reform that dominated many town halls this summer and is the force behind the “patriot tea parties” against the Obama administration’s spending plans. These gatherings have gained notoriety because of the placards showing President Barack Obama with a Hitler-style moustache, labelling him a “Muslim Marxist” and claiming he is not even American.

The organisation campaigns in favour of a free market, lower taxation and smaller government. On this basis they protested the US stimulus package too.

Though the group is active online via Twitter, Facebook and so on, its critics say it is an ‘astro-turfing’ effort, one which describes itself as being funded by ordinary individuals but really represents the interests of big companies. One of its key backers in recent years was Koch Family Foundations, run by the group that owns Koch Industries, the largest privately-owned energy company in the US.

(You can peruse the 990 forms for AFP [here](#) and for the Americans for Prosperity Foundation [here](#), though neither have details of the organisations’ major contributors.)

The Kochs are dyed in the wool supporters of free markets; executive vice president David Koch is on the board of the conservative think-tank Cato Institute, and reportedly ran as the Libertarian vice presidential candidate in 1980.

Charles Koch, the chief executive of Koch Industries, was a founding member of Cato and, well, you can read this speech titled ‘[Creating a science of liberty](#)’ to get the picture.

But on the cap and trade front, the happy coincidence is that Koch Industries is [big in refining](#) - which is [thought likely to be hard hit](#) under the House cap and trade bill.

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