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[Chief Climate Skeptic, Brought to You By Big Energy](#)

by [chris santiago](#)

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• 978 Views



Patrick Michaels is the mainstream media's go-to-guy for denying climate change. He's [quoted heavily](#) in a recent CBS News Report knocking the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. He's taken pot shots at climate scientists in the [Wall Street Journal](#), on Anderson Cooper, and even in the sacrosanct [pages](#) of The Grey Lady.

And it's no wonder he's been dubbed honorary captain of the Skeptics: Michaels holds a Ph.D. in ecological climatology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He's a senior fellow at both the arch-conservative Cato Institute and George Mason University's School of Public Policy. As a past president of the American Association of State Climatologists, he seems, on the surface, like the boy crying wolf from the inside.

But in a recent post, Kate Sheppard at *Mother Jones* [points out](#) that—surprise, surprise—Patrick Michaels has money ties to Big Energy. Not only that, Michaels has gone out of his way to hide these ties from the public.

In 2007, a cadre of auto industry heavyweights wanted to challenge the state of Vermont's emission standards. They planned to call Michaels to the stand to poke holes in the notion that greenhouse gas emissions are causing climate change.

But when the lawyers defending Vermont's law pushed to make Michaels' clients at [New Hope Environmental Services](#) public—and when the judge in the case agreed that the client list was fair game—Michaels balked, saying that to do so would "imperil his livelihood." The auto industry pulled him off the stand. Court documents later revealed that at least one of Michaels' major clients was, you guessed it, a ginormous energy company.

And that's just tip of the (melting) iceberg. Sheppard [lists](#) a long, dirty history of energy industry payouts to Michaels for denying climate change, including grants from the Western Fuels Association, the Edison Electric Institute, the Intermountain Rural Electric Association, the German Coal Mining Association, and Cyprus Minerals.

Ironically, one of Patrick Michaels' biggest beefs with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is its lack of transparency. Ain't that the pot calling the kettle black.

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