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- Mayor Fenty
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## Cuccinelli's strange fishing trip

LOCAL BLOG NETWORK



GALUSZKA

You can't get much more over the top than [Virginia Attorney General Kenneth N. Cuccinelli II's "civil investigative demands"](#) for information and e-mails involving five grants supposedly involving global warming at the University of Virginia.

There's no question that the attack harms academic freedom, as groups such as the [Union of Concerned Scientists](#), the [American Association of University Professors](#) and the [American Civil Liberties Union](#) claim. Cuccinelli is seeking e-mails from no fewer than 40 scientists from around the world who communicated with former U-Va. and now Penn State professor Michael Mann, who believes humans contribute to global warming and who was connected to the grants that Cuccinelli believes may have led to fraudulent science.

There are two other curious elements to this story.

One is that U-Va.'s Department of Environmental Sciences has long been a hotbed of controversy. It was headed for years by S. Fred Singer, now a familiar face on the conservative speaker circuit, challenging the view that human activity is driving climate change. Another professor in the department was Patrick Michaels, the former "state climatologist" who lost that position when then-Gov. Tim Kaine (D) eliminated it in 2006. He now is with the libertarian Cato Institute.

Another strange facet of the story is that Cuccinelli may be on an expensive fishing trip. One of the grants he is probing, Mann and another U.Va. professor told me, doesn't involve research into global warming at all. It was used to help fund graduate student research into ecology in Botswana.

Go figure.

*Peter Galuszka blogs at [Bacon's Rebellion](#). The Local Blog Network is a group of bloggers from around the D.C. region who have agreed to make regular contributions to All Opinions Are Local.*

By Peter Galuszka | May 6, 2010; 2:00 PM ET  
Categories: [HotTopic](#), [Local blog network](#), [Virginia](#), [environment](#)

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