



# Citizens' Climate Lobby

MEDIA PACKET

## Rep. [LAST NAME] can celebrate Earth Day by joining bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus

With each natural disaster made worse by climate change, whether devastating wildfires in California or biblical floods in Houston, more and more Americans see the need to reduce the heat-trapping gases that are heating up our world.

But with the current administration [dismantling any and all initiatives](#) to address climate change, and with Congress missing in action for the better part of a decade, the public is left to wonder if our government will ever act to reduce the significant threat that climate change poses to our nation and the rest of the world.

### Hope for climate action in Congress

Hope for such action, however, is emerging with the growth of the bipartisan [Climate Solutions Caucus](#) in the House of Representatives. Two years ago, two Florida congressmen — Republican Carlos Curbelo and Democrat Ted Deutch — came together with a radical idea: What if we created a judgment-free zone where Democrats and Republicans could get together and have civil, informed conversations about climate change with the aim of finding common ground for effective solutions?

And with that, the Climate Solutions Caucus was launched in February 2016. In order to be truly bipartisan, Curbelo and Deutch decided the caucus would have equal numbers of Republicans and Democrats. A member of Congress joining the caucus must have a member from the other party joining with them. Today, the caucus has 72 members — half Republicans and half Democrats.

For those wondering how 36 Republicans ended up on the Climate Solutions Caucus, the answer is pretty simple: Our democracy, despite what many cynics may think, actually works. Throughout the nation, Americans deeply concerned about climate change are [asking their representatives, particularly Republicans, to join the caucus](#). These requests come in face-to-face meetings, personal letters, phone calls and letters to the editor in local newspapers. Members of Congress, eager to please their constituents, want to say “yes” to the people they represent whenever possible. When a significant number of constituents ask them to join a caucus exploring bipartisan solutions to climate change, they’re inclined to get on board.

## **An Earth Day opportunity**

With Earth Day approaching, this would be the perfect time for Rep. [NAME HERE] to join the Climate Solutions Caucus and become part of the movement to enact effective, bipartisan solutions to climate change. The original Earth Day touched off the environmental movement that led to the passage of the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act and to the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency. This Earth Day, members of Congress should be similarly inspired to take the steps necessary to address the greatest environmental threat our nation and world has ever faced: climate change.

Like Curbelo and Deutch, Congress [man/woman] [LAST NAME] represents a district facing significant risks from climate change.

[INSERT A FEW SENTENCES ABOUT THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE DISTRICT AND HOW THAT IMPACT IS EXPECTED TO WORSEN IN A BUSINESS-AS-USUAL SCENARIO. IF THERE IS AN ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE DISTRICT -- JOBS IN RENEWABLES OR ENERGY EFFICIENCY -- MENTION THAT, TOO].

## **Climate change is costly and dangerous**

In the past few years, climate-related disasters have presented a clear warning that we're fast approaching the tipping point where climate change will spiral beyond our ability to adapt and recover:

- Last year, three back-to-back hurricanes — Harvey, Irma and Maria — unleashed the fury of water and wind, causing destruction on an unprecedented scale, with a total cost estimated at [\\$265 billion](#).
- In California, where drought and heat combined to create conditions in 2017 that fueled the state's [worst year for wildfires](#), nearly 9,000 fires burned 1.2 million acres (about the size of Delaware), destroying nearly 10,800 structures and killing 46 people.
- Drought that struck North Dakota, South Dakota and Montana in 2017 cost an estimated [\\$2.5 billion](#).
- 2016 was a [record-setting year for major floods](#) in the U.S. with 19, the costliest one being in Louisiana, killing 13 people, destroying 60,000 buildings and costing \$10 billion.

The impacts we are witnessing now, not just in the U.S. but throughout the world, will only get worse without meaningful steps to reduce carbon pollution. The World Bank recently released a study saying that [143 million people](#) are expected to become climate refugees as more and more places become uninhabitable. Mass migrations, as well as food and water shortages, are some of the destabilizing factors caused by climate change that national security experts categorize as "[threat multipliers](#)."

Looking at climate action from a more positive viewpoint, a recent study published in the journal *Nature Climate Change* estimates that [150 million lives would be saved](#) by the end of the century through efforts taken to keep global temperatures from rising more than 3 degrees Fahrenheit above pre-industrial levels. That's because the air pollution responsible for those deaths would be drastically reduced.

To save lives and reduce the considerable risks posed by climate change, the United States must step up with an aggressive policy to curtail greenhouse gas emissions. This will require Democrats and Republicans in Congress working together to solve the problem. The bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus in the House offers the best vehicle for this collaboration.

Rep. [\[LAST NAME\]](#) can be part of this effort. What better way for a member of Congress to celebrate Earth Day than by joining a caucus dedicated to solving climate change?

## CLIMATE SOLUTIONS CAUCUS HIGHLIGHTS

- In April of 2017, four Republicans on the caucus [wrote to urge President Trump](#) to keep the U.S. in the Paris Climate Agreement.
- In May of 2017, 12 members of the caucus — six Republicans and six Democrats — introduced the [Climate Solutions Commission Act](#), which would establish a commission with 10 members — five appointed by Republicans and five appointed by Democrats — to undertake a comprehensive review of economically viable public and private actions or policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- In July of 2017, all but two of the Republicans on the caucus [voted to defeat an amendment to the Defense authorization bill](#) that would have struck a requirement for the military to assess climate change risks. Emboldened by the Republicans on the caucus, 24 other Republicans voted against the amendment as well, sending it to defeat.
- On Nov. 1, 2017, 10 members of the caucus [gave speeches on the floor](#) of the House about climate change and the need for congressional action.
- In December of 2017, 12 Republicans on the caucus [sent a letter to congressional leaders](#) urging them to drop a provision in the tax bill that would allow oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
- When President Trump announced plans in January of 2018 to open U.S. coastal waters to offshore drilling, at least [20 members of the caucus](#), including seven Republicans, expressed their opposition.
- In February of 2018, caucus members Dan Lipinski (D-IL) and John Faso (R-NY) introduced the [Challenges and Prizes for Climate Act of 2018](#) to encourage innovation on climate solutions. Caucus members Charlie Crist (D-FL), Carlos Curbelo (R-FL), Stephanie Murphy (D-FL), and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) joined as cosponsors.