



## [Conservatives and industry leaders can work together to protect our environment](#)

By Matt Sandgren and Benji Backer | Friday, May 5, 2023

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It's time for conservatives to steer the conversation on climate change .

Until now, climate discussions have been distracted by big government proposals that have rightly given conservatives reason to pause. But the conservative movement is beginning to take the reins and offer competing perspectives that are consistent with limited government and free enterprise.

Our organizations recently joined forces to host the first-ever Congressional Climate Bootcamp, convening members of Congress and industry leaders to discuss energy, innovation, and protecting our environment for future generations.

These leaders highlighted the necessity of collaboration between policy experts and industry. They noted the technological advancements happening nationwide aimed at improving the planet and urged conservatives to speak confidently about climate issues, emphasizing the many solutions conservatives can offer to our environmental challenges.

For too long, the energy industry has been unjustly vilified in environmental conversations. The reality is that many companies have been leading the way on these crucial issues. Much of our progress in reducing emissions is because of industry efforts, not despite them. From 2005 to 2017, for example, the United States reduced more emissions than the next 12 countries combined, with comparatively little government intervention.

By harnessing the power of markets, competition, and innovation, industry has been able to do what the government could not.

Which is why it was heartening to hear industry leaders from organizations such as the American Clean Power Association, the American Petroleum Institute, and Southern Company talk about pursuing an all-of-the-above energy approach and making all forms of energy cleaner. It was also encouraging to hear them stress the importance of streamlining our energy permitting process to unleash *all* forms of American energy.

Failing to engage is not an option. If Republicans are to succeed on climate issues, we can't allow ourselves to be portrayed as apathetic. That's not who we are. We are the party of the future, the party of innovation, and the party of free markets. And if we are to tackle the environmental challenges we face, we need to harness the power of all these things.

As famed conservative commentator and author William F. Buckley Jr. once said, "Conservatism is the tacit acknowledgment that all that is finally important in human experience is behind us; that the crucial explorations have been undertaken, and that it is given to man to know what are the great truths that emerged from them."

That sentiment expresses a core belief that it is the responsibility of the current generation to acknowledge and build upon the successes of the past. When it comes to the environment, we should ground our efforts in the lessons of the past that taught us the importance of protecting the natural world. It means it's our responsibility to use emerging technologies and sustainable practices to achieve this goal. We need more of these important conversations to reach our climate goals while keeping America's lights on. Our environmental challenges require all hands on deck; indeed, every stakeholder has a role in finding solutions that work for all Americans.

By working together within this framework, we can show the world that conservatives are not only capable of addressing environmental challenges, but that we are the ones best suited to do so.

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