**To:** Interested Parties

**From:**

**Date:**

**Re:** Americans Need an EPA Administrator Who Listens to Community Concerns Not Polluters Demands

According to two recently-released polls from researchers at [Yale and George Mason Universities](http://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/climate-change-in-the-american-mind-december-2018/) as well as the [University of Chicago and Associated Press](http://www.apnorc.org/projects/Documents/EPIC%20fact%20sheet_v4_DTP.pdf?wpisrc=nl_energy202&wpmm=1), climate change continues to grow as a top concern facing Americans. Following a year of record-breaking wildfires and hurricanes as well as dire reports released by the [United Nations](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/07/climate/ipcc-climate-report-2040.html), [the World Health Organization](https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/05-12-2018-health-benefits-far-outweigh-the-costs-of-meeting-climate-change-goals) and [the federal government](https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/), it’s become clear that we must take action to address the imminent threat climate change poses to our health, national security and economy. Nevertheless, Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler – a former lobbyist for the coal industry – continues to roll back critical climate protections at the behest of his former employers.

**In light of these new studies along with Wheeler’s actions to date, we encourage your newspaper to report that he is out of step with the communities he’s in charge of protecting.**

**In the coming weeks, the Senate will vote on Wheeler’s confirmation to be permanent EPA chief. Given EPA’s mission to protect public health and the environment and the growing concern from the majority of Americans that climate change is happening, we hope you’ll argue that based on the facts, [STATE]’s Senators should vote against Wheeler’s confirmation on the basis that he refuses to listen to leading experts and the public will in favor of his polluter friends.**

* The consensus from the Yale/George Mason and University of Chicago/AP polls is that faced with the dire consequences of extreme weather made worse by climate change, more Americans than ever believe that our climate is warming and say that the issue is personally important to them.
* The Yale and George Mason poll found:
	+ Americans who think climate change is happening outnumber those who think it is not by more than a 5-to-1 ratio, with 73 percent of Americans believing climate change is happening, an increase of ten percentage points since March 2015;
	+ More than half of Americans (57 percent) understand that most scientists agree that climate change is occurring, the highest level since 2008;
	+ Roughly half of Americans think climate change is affecting them (49 percent), their family (56 percent), and their community (57 percent); and
	+ Approximately two-thirds (65 percent) of Americans believe climate change is affecting weather in the United States.
* These polls comes on the heels of [additional data released](http://www.apnorc.org/projects/Documents/EPIC%20fact%20sheet_v4_DTP.pdf?wpisrc=nl_energy202&wpmm=1) by the University of Chicago and the Associated Press which show even a majority of Republicans (52 percent) are joining the overwhelming majority of Democrats (86 percent) in agreeing that climate change is happening.
* With 2018 standing out as [record-breaking year for extreme weather](https://www.washingtonpost.com/science/2018/12/31/extreme-weather-was-raging-howling-signal-climate-change/?utm_term=.2c7ca7f46788) - from wildfires raging out West to Hurricanes Michael and Florence devastating the Southeast - it’s no wonder why climate change is on the top of Americans’ minds.
* And while Americans across the country prepare to pick up the pieces of 2018’s destruction, the UN International Panel on Climate Change, the World Health Organization, and the Department of Defense warn that without significant action to address climate change, we’ll be facing more of the same in 2019 and beyond.
* From dramatic health impacts to [threats to our military’s readiness and infrastructure](https://partner-mco-archive.s3.amazonaws.com/client_files/1547826612.pdf), these reports stress the devastating consequences of not taking immediate action.
* With the pile of scientific data and outcry for action, it would make sense for Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler to listen to the communities he’s supposed to be protecting. But instead, he’s focused on doing favors for his polluter allies he used to work for, rolling back critical protections like the Clean Power Plan, the clean car standards, and federal methane pollution limits, which are some of the best policies we have on the books to fight climate change and protect our health.
* The reality is that Americans need an EPA administrator who listens to them and is committed to protecting our health and environment, not someone who is a climate skeptic set on rolling back climate and public health protections.

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