**CAC MESSAGE GUIDANCE: Andrew Wheeler Continues to Ignore the Impacts of Climate Change**

* It is EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler’s job to respond to take action to protect public health and the environment and to find solutions to climate change. Instead, he went on national television and claimed that climate change is a distant problem, one that won’t be felt for 50 to 75 years.
* He couldn’t be more wrong.
* Wheeler’s comments ignore the advice of scientists from 13 federal agencies – including his own – who outlined in the [National Climate Assessment](https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/) that the impacts of climate change are already being felt in communities across the country.
	+ According to the NCA: “More frequent and intense extreme weather and climate-related events, as well as changes in average climate conditions, are expected to continue to damage infrastructure, ecosystems, and social systems that provide essential benefits to communities.”
* From wildfires that devastated communities out west to hurricanes that destroyed communities along the eastern seaboard and Puerto Rico to flooding that just this week is wreaking havoc in the Midwest, it couldn’t be clearer that the impacts of climate change are being felt here and now.
* The amount of money the United States alone spends responding to extreme weather events is astronomical – with more than [$300 billion in cumulative damage](https://www.climate.gov/news-features/blogs/beyond-data/2017-us-billion-dollar-weather-and-climate-disasters-historic-year) in 2017, shattering the previous record set in 2005.
* Americans overwhelmingly believe there is an urgent need to act on climate change after years of inaction. A [November AP-University of Chicago poll](http://www.apnorc.org/projects/Documents/EPIC%20fact%20sheet_v4_DTP.pdf?wpisrc=nl_energy202&wpmm=1) found 86% of Democrats, 70% of Independents and 52% of Republicans believe that climate change is happening now; and of those who believe climate change is happening, *83 percent say the federal government should take steps to address climate change*.
* It is no surprise that Wheeler, a former lobbyist for the coal industry, willfully ignores the science and public will. He’s made it clear he’s working for his industry allies not the American people. He’s unfit to serve as EPA Administrator.
* What Wheeler fails to realize or chooses to ignore is that every year of inaction and every ton of carbon pollution released into the atmosphere is deadly.