



Letters

Winter 2026

Al Gore Got Climate Wars All Wrong

by Steve Milloy, Senior Policy Fellow
As appearing on the *Daily Caller*



Al Gore said that climate change could lead to war. That has not happened. Instead, the climate alarm he helped foment has fueled war.

In his 2007 Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Gore stated: “Climate refugees have migrated into areas already inhabited by people with different cultures, religions, and traditions, increasing the potential for conflict.”

Less than 20 years later, we are amid two major wars and trying to prevent a third one. But none of these wars have anything to do with the imaginary phenomenon of “climate refugees.” Rather, they all related to energy policy disasters caused by Gore’s climate advocacy.

Europe’s industrial nations, especially the United Kingdom and Germany, were the first major economies to fall for the climate hoax. They created the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in the late-1980s that set out to destroy fossil fuel-based energy systems.

In 1997, Europe signed on to the

Kyoto protocol even though the world’s largest energy user (the United States), the world’s fastest growing energy user (China) and the world’s other fossil fuel powerhouse (Russia) made no commitments to reduce fossil fuel use.

Europe’s industrial economies began to drastically cut their production and use of coal and natural gas in order to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases per their Kyoto obligations. They doubled down on this fool’s errand in the 2015 Paris Climate Accord, despite the U.S, China and Russia not following suit.

Though Europe dramatically cut its production of coal, oil and natural gas, it continued to burn coal and gas to generate electricity and for industrial purposes. Europe replaced its own fossil fuel production with fossil fuels imported from Russia. By 2022, Europe had made itself quite dependent on Russia for energy.

This dependence not only enriched Russia, it gave Russia economic leverage over Europe. As soon as President Joe Biden signaled American weakness, Russia made its move on Ukraine. This is the first climate war that can be traced exactly to emissions cuts.

The conditions for the second climate war – the current war with Iran were helped along by anti-fossil fuel mania in the U.S. Although it has always been crystal clear that oil and gas are the

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Using an old expression, “Well, that just beats the Dutch!,” which means something extraordinary, Greg Walcher reports on actions by a North Dakota Court. They've actually ordered Greenpeace to pay significant damages.

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CA Oil Companies Warn of Doom

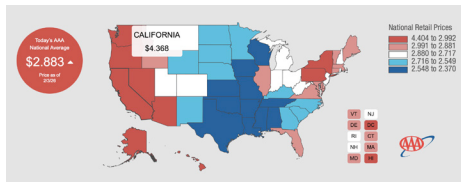


Katy Grimes reports that 3 major oil producers have warned Governor Newsom and the state agency responsible for implementing his onerous energy regulations that their policies will bring doom and destruction to the Golden State.

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Valero Shut Down Benicia Refinery Jan 31st - Gas Prices Already Up

by Katie Grimes, Senior Media Fellow
As appearing in the *California Globe*



Predictable, inevitable, regrettable, and preventable... CA is facing \$8.43/g gas as refineries close

The Valero oil refinery in Benicia, CA is shut down. Mike Ariza, former Valero manager and oil and gas expert, told the *Globe* Tuesday that they started shutting down January 31st, and thermal imaging reports that the refinery is cold. And he said the Crimson pipeline, which moved crude oil from Southern California to Northern California is also down.

"We are in an unprecedented oil crisis," Ariza said.

In April 2025, Valero Energy Corporation announced it would shut down its Benicia Refinery in April 2026.

This hit came after Chevron Oil Company relocated to Houston, Texas from the Bay Area, and Phillips 66 began shutting down its Los Angeles refinery in October 2025.

But our oil experts predicted months ago that Valero appeared to be aiming to shut down sooner, and gas prices were already starting to shoot up.

As oil and gas expert USC Professor Michael Mische reported at the *Globe* in April:

"Citing low operating margins, increased operating costs and a growingly harsh regulatory environment, including a state mandated moratorium on the sale of internal combustion engine vehicles by 2035, and in the wake of an \$85 million fine related to "egregious emissions violations levied on it by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Valero Energy Corporation today, April 16, 2025, served notice to the California Energy Commission (CEC) to "idle, restructure, or cease refining operations at Valero's Benicia Refinery by the end of April 2026." Correspondingly, and in recognition of its plans for the California operational environment, Valero has incurred a write-off charge of \$1.1 billion related to asset

impairments for its Benicia and Wilmington California refinery operations."

In January, California Governor Gavin Newsom issued a statement following Valero oil company's update that it would power down its Benicia refinery but continue to supply California's market with imported gas.

Newsom's statement read as if a 10-year old yelled "Look at ME" wrote it:

"While others point fingers to spread fear and divide us, California is doing the actual work—collaborating with industry, using data and transparency to protect consumers, and building the all-of-the-above energy future America needs. We're in ongoing discussions with Valero to evaluate options for continued operations at the Benicia refinery and I appreciate the company planning responsibly, including planning for imports of refined products to supply the market in the meantime."

Newsom even took a tactless victory lap, as if he is responsible for saving Valero. Important to note: it's Gavin Newsom's "clean energy all electric future" with a ban on internal combustion engine autos, which has inflicted the most harm on the oil and gas industry.

The national average price for a gallon of gas today is \$2.89; California's average price for a gallon of gas is \$4.25 – and climbing.

As the *Globe* reported in December, Gov. Newsom is presiding over perhaps the largest energy policy collapse of the oil industry, refinery operations and gasoline production in U.S. history. A momentous report recently prepared by CA Assemblyman Stan Ellis, USC Professor Michael Mische, and petroleum expert Michael Ariza, warned that California's self-inflicted gas crisis is also a direct threat to U.S. military force readiness on the West Coast, the *Globe* reported in October.

Their report exposed how Gov. Newsom's energy policies are sabotaging domestic refining capacity and leaving U.S. military bases in the West vulnerable to foreign adversaries like Russia and China.

Their conclusion is that there must be federal intervention.

Ariza told the *Globe* in December that Valero, which announced in April '25 that it would be shutting down its Benicia refinery in April 2026, bumped the closure date up to January. Ariza explained why:

"The Phillips 66 refinery in Wilmington shut down on October 17th is taking 140,000 barrels per day of crude oil refining offline. Originally Valero in Benicia was slated to shut down in April of 2026. However, given the fact that they canceled their crude oil contracts over six weeks ago it looks like they will be shutting down no later than January of 2026, four months ahead of schedule.

Now, Valero is not even seeking to try and sell the refinery. Even after the state tried to convince Valero to remain open, they elected to shut down. And instead of shutting down in April, they shutdown in January. All due to the state's egregious regulations and unprecedented unjustified fines."

Ariza said when refineries shut down, more Californians will leave the state. California's oil and gas industry provides 536,770 total jobs in California and 148,140 Californians are directly employed by its individual companies—along with the \$338 billion total economic contribution to California's economy.

Notably, in January, the *Globe* reported, "In an offensive move underscoring the ripple effects of California's radical and punitive energy policies, Nevada Governor Joe Lombardo (R) announced today the appointments to the newly established Fuel Resiliency Committee."

Arizona gets nearly half of its gas from California. And the vast majority of Nevada's gas – 88% – comes from California.

California today produces less than 23% of its own in-state petroleum needs and imports over 65% of its crude oil from foreign sources, yet the oil and gas industry in California account for nearly 8% of the state's GDP, even in its diminished capacity.

In 1988, the state of California only imported about 4.5% of all the oil that we consumed in our state. By 2020 we were importing over 70%.

As Assemblyman Ellis, Professor Mische, and petroleum expert Ariza warned recently, without oil and gas, the other 92% of the state's GDP would be impossible to attain.

Remember, USC Professor Michael Mische has warned that CA is facing \$8.43 per gallon of gas as refineries close.

That won't look good in a presidential campaign. □

How to spend Venezuela's oil money

by Greg Walcher, Senior Policy Fellow
As appearing in *The Daily Sentinel*



America's capture of Venezuelan dictator Nicolas Maduro has commentators arguing about what to do with the country's oil. In many ways, it's the wrong argument. Global political and market forces will ultimately determine whose cars and factories benefit. However, the future of the country and its industry will not be determined by the fate of its oil, but by what happens to the money.

More than 68% of Venezuela's oil production has been going to China, about 23% to the U.S., and 4% each to Cuba and Spain. The Trump administration has a different plan for the future of that oil, assuming the infrastructure can be rebuilt. The system was neglected, robbed, and ignored by a regime focused on drugs instead. President Trump wants major oil companies to go do what they do best, though several are reluctant to invest in the country that twice stole all the facilities they built. Eventually, though, some will make the investment because the resource is too big to ignore.

With more than 300 billion barrels of proven reserves, Venezuela has more oil than any other country. If produced, the economic impact could be almost unimaginable. It represents not only an economic opportunity, but also means for addressing severe shortages of food, medicine and basic

services, the inevitable result of corruption. That economic opportunity is where the debate ought to be.

It is a chance to create a new system, in which the people of Venezuela have a personal stake in a political process that preserves freedom, democracy, and private enterprise. That does not require American military action — it requires a different vision for the money. It is not the first time we have seen such opportunity.

Before the Iraq War, the U.S. tried to replace Saddam Hussein's regime and set up an Iraqi national oil company, as was done in Iran in 1954. It was wrong approach then, and would be the wrong approach now. Legendary economist Milton Friedman explained the mistake in a 2004 interview with David Asman. "A terrible mistake... We should have... sold all of the oil resources, taken the capital and put it in a fund for the people of Iraq. Very much like we did with the oil fund that they have in Alaska." Asman added, "So that every single law-abiding Iraqi would have a share of Iraqi oil." Friedman: "The only thing that the government would do is to get the income from it to distribute to the Iraqi people. So that the Iraqi people would have a direct stake in peace and prosperity in their own country."

Indeed, look at how that works in Alaska. Despite environmental and legal delays, the Trans Alaska Pipeline was built within a decade. That's because politics were overcome by the personal interests of the people of Alaska. They adopted a constitutional amendment creating the Alaska Permanent Fund to manage oil

royalties, putting at least 25% into a dedicated fund for future generations. It was an ingenious idea mostly because it put that financial resource out of the reach of political control.

It is now the largest sovereign wealth fund in America with a market value of \$70 billion, and it pays dividends to Alaskans based on the fund's performance — \$31.3 billion over the years. On average, Alaskans have received \$1,230 a year since the fund began, nearly \$5,000 for a family of four. So, they have a personal stake in energy industry success, because their annual dividends rise and fall with the industry's ups and downs. In 2024 the amount was \$1,702 for every man, woman, and child.

So, what happens when that system is threatened? In 1999, with oil prices at \$9 a barrel and low prices forecast into the foreseeable future, the state asked voters to spend some of the fund to bolster its budget. Despite support from all the elected officials, and huge campaign spending, 84% of voters said "no." They protect their oil revenues, and Alaskans will never vote for politicians who want to kill the industry.

Venezuelans would be just as firm in their support for a strong energy economy. The oil can go wherever leaders decide to sell it, but if the money goes to the people, a steady and permanent flow will be guaranteed. Today in Iraq, 99% of government revenue comes from oil. But their system remains unstable because that vast wealth has never trickled down to ordinary citizens. Nothing would better stabilize a prosperous future for Venezuela. □

Did President Trump Just End The Climate Hoax?

by Steve Milloy, Senior Policy Fellow
As appearing on the *Daily Caller*



President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of dozens of United Nations organizations, conventions and treaties, including two that are key to the international climate hoax – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Does this mean that the climate hoax is over?

The U.N. formed the IPCC in the late 1980s as an organization to research and recommend policies to prevent the presumed adverse effects of greenhouse gas emissions on the climate. It quickly became the oracle of all things climate related. It issued periodic, highly anticipated and widely publicized reports on climate. In 1995, it began holding annual climate conferences, the 30th and most recent one being held in Brazil in November.

The first IPCC report, hurriedly released in 1990, presumed to establish a scientific basis for apocalyptic climate alarmism. It was used as a basis for the UNFCCC, which was the first climate treaty and became the parent treaty of the subsequent treaties known as the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and the 2015 Paris Climate Accords. The UNFCCC is important because it is the framework for global emissions cuts, particularly by rich countries. (RELATED: Trump Admin Withdrawing From ‘Anti-American’ Global Climate Change Regimes)

By pulling the U.S. out of the

IPCC and the UNFCCC, Trump has signaled that the U.S. will no longer be involved in climate alarmism on an international level. Recall that last September during his speech to the U.N. General Assembly, Trump spent more than 10 minutes excoriating the climate hoax. “The carbon footprint is a hoax, made up by people with evil intentions, and they’re heading down a path of total destruction,” he stated.

Trump has also been acting at home to end the hoax. The EPA is expected in January or February to rescind the 2009 Obama EPA’s “endangerment finding” for greenhouse gases. This move would officially reverse the alleged scientific basis for emissions cuts such that EPA could not regulate greenhouse gas emissions.

These are and will be monumental achievements. The only downside is that they are not permanent and, therefore, the climate hoax is not yet dead. If Republicans fail to win the White House in 2028, a Democrat president will likely race to rejoin the IPCC and UNFCCC and possibly revive the endangerment finding.

What needs to be done?

Congress should pass a law before Trump leaves office barring the U.S. from spending any money related to international climate efforts without the express authorization of Congress. This would keep the U.S. out of groups like the IPCC. This law should also bar funding for implementation of executive agreements, like the Paris Climate Accord.

President Barack Obama knew the Republican-controlled Senate would not ratify the Paris Climate Accord as a treaty, so he signed it as an executive agreement that did not require ratification. There should be no funding for efforts that dodge the Constitution.

The Senate should also pass a resolution affirming Trump’s withdrawal from the UNFCCC. While Trump likely has authority to unilaterally pull the U.S. out of treaties, it can’t hurt to have the Senate concur in this. Unless the Senate does this, a President Gavin Newsom, for example, would likely unilaterally decide that Trump had no authority to pull out of the UNFCCC. President Newsom would then resume U.S. participation as if it had never exited the treaty.

The final task concerns the EPA’s endangerment finding. The coming rescission of the endangerment finding will certainly be litigated all the way to the Supreme Court. Given the present make-up of the Court, Trump should prevail 6-3 since Congress never authorized EPA to regulate greenhouse gases in the first place.

But here’s the problem. Litigation is unpredictable. When would SCOTUS get the case? Who will be President? What will Congress look like? What could a Democrat Congress do? Recall that Obama issued his Clean Power Plan in 2015 and it was stayed by SCOTUS in 2016. But the litigation didn’t end until 2022 in the *West Virginia v. EPA* decision. Because the litigation circumvented the endangerment finding, the Biden EPA just went back to the drawing board and issued a new regulation that the Trump EPA is now in the process of repealing. That repeal will also be litigated. You get the picture.

The bottom line is that the climate hoax is far from over. If nothing else, there is about \$500 billion worth of Green New Scam spending that was not able to be cut by the One Big Beautiful Bill. Climate activists and rent-seekers have spent almost 40 years growing the climate hoax. They are not just going to let Trump consign it to oblivion by Executive order. □

Greenpeace judge may beat the Dutch

by Greg Walcher, Senior Policy Fellow
As appearing in *The Daily Sentinel*



My granddad had a great expression when something was remarkable or astonishing: “Well, that just beats the Dutch!” It was a linguistic heirloom of the 17th century when England and the Netherlands were commercial and naval rivals. Something had to be extreme to surpass even the Dutch, so that became a common saying even on the American frontier.

It crossed my mind this week when a North Dakota judge ordered Greenpeace to pay the substantial damages awarded by a jury for the group’s organization and funding of protests at the Dakota Access pipeline. The pipeline owners, Energy Transfer Partners, sued and the jury found Greenpeace guilty of conspiracy, trespass, nuisance and tortious interference. The latter refers to a standoff that lasted months, with protesters chaining themselves to equipment, destroying pipeline parts, and throwing feces and burning logs at workers. The chaos delayed the project and cost pipeline owners an estimated \$7.5 billion. The jury originally awarded damages totaling \$666.9 million, which the judge eventually reduced by half.

Greenpeace lawyers said, “We will be requesting a new trial and, failing that, will appeal the judgment to the Supreme Court of North Dakota,” but they certainly aren’t banking on that. Instead, the group appealed the verdict — not to any court in North Dakota, but to a Dutch court.

Greenpeace International filed suit in the District Court of Amsterdam, asking it to overrule the American court...

In ordinary appeals, a higher court is asked to review a lower court’s ruling. But here, Greenpeace is asking a Dutch court to review an American case under a European Union “directive” written to protect protesters against lawsuits. It is the first time anyone has tried to apply it outside Europe, though, and obviously Dutch courts have no authority in America. Greenpeace USA’s parent organization, Greenpeace International...is headquartered in the Netherlands, but of course it is not accused of any crime there.

The pipeline company...is appealing the judge’s reduction of the jury-awarded damages, which didn’t come close to reimbursing the money the protesters and their funders cost the project, its owners, employees, and especially customers.

In a financial court filing, Greenpeace USA certified that it does not have the money to pay, saying it will not be able “to continue normal operations if the judgment is enforced.” The organization reported \$1.4 million in cash, and total assets of \$23 million. Its leaders say the court-ordered damages would put Greenpeace out of business. How sad. This is the group that fueled today’s anti-automobile crusade with its now-famous 1990 New York Times ad, admonishing Americans, “It wasn’t the Exxon Valdez captain’s driving that caused the Alaskan oil spill. It was yours.”

Despite the bankruptcy threat, and notwithstanding any appeal to any foreign court, Judge James Gion said this week he will order Greenpeace to pay the judgment. That will touch off a round of

appeals in the state Supreme Court, and it may take some time to be resolved.

Whether or not the award is eventually paid, whether or not it puts Greenpeace out of business, it may at least caution some activist groups against going too far with these protests, which often lead to vandalism and violence. And rather than just arresting a few protesters, it is time the law focuses at least some scrutiny on those who fund and organize them.

Greenpeace tried to claim its employees had little or no involvement in the pipeline protests, and nothing to do with Energy Transfer’s construction delays. But at the time, an email from its own U.S. executive director boasted about the “massive” support it provided to the protests. According to trial evidence, that included funding and training the protestors and giving them the tools and equipment to chain themselves to pipeline machinery. No wonder the jury’s nine-figure verdict included \$400 million in punitive damages.

Apparently, the group’s backup plan, in case the North Dakota Supreme Court fails to take pity on them, is the District Court of Amsterdam. The wording of the European law, upon which that filing is based, implies that its courts have power to relitigate cases — even in other countries — where they think parties have been subjected to “abusive court proceedings,” or “excessive” claims.

Maybe the European Union wants to regulate the entire world, but my guess is the North Dakota courts couldn’t care less what an Amsterdam district judge thinks. Doesn’t that just beat the Dutch! □

Gore Got Climate Wars Wrong (Cont.)

irreplaceable life blood of the modern world, Presidents Barack Obama and Biden did their best to discourage expansion of U.S. oil and gas energy production, while simultaneously wrecking the vital U.S. coal industry.

Obama was careful not to get too much in the way of revolutionary fracking technology as long as it was useful in his plan to destroy the U.S. coal industry. But he dragged his feet on developing the export of liquified natural gas (LNG) even though the U.S. market was glutted with it.

Biden was worse as he actively discouraged oil and gas investors with his re-embrace of Obama’s climate agenda, setting back U.S. oil and gas industry development and production for years. That setback along with ongoing European anti-fossil fuel sentiment has left too much of global production of oil dependent on the Strait of Hormuz. Instead of just decapitating Iran’s terrorist regime, now we also have to secure 20 percent of global oil needs.

The potential third climate war involves China, which would like to capture Taiwan and become the lone global superpower by 2049.

Thanks to climate hysteria and the Green New Scam, much of the U.S. energy grid has been made dependent on wind, solar and battery equipment from Communist China. China has been trying for decades to make the U.S. and Europe even more dependent on it than Europe was on Russia in 2022. And we may just be, though President Donald Trump is trying to remedy the situation by his actions in Venezuela and Iran.

More than just clownish science fraud, Al Gore’s climate alarm has been a geopolitical disaster. We already have two emission cuts-related wars raging. Let’s not let a third one occur. □

Marathon, Chevron, PBF Warn Governor Newsom of Impending Doom

by Katie Grimes, Senior Media Fellow
As appearing in the *California Globe*



Gov. Newsom is presiding over perhaps the largest collapse of the oil industry, refinery operations and gasoline production in U.S. history

With Marathon Petroleum sending a blistering warning to Governor Gavin Newsom and top state officials in a letter declaring that proposed amendments to the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Cap-and-Invest program would destroy what's left of California oil refineries, that makes three severe warnings by the state's remaining petroleum companies.

Last month, PBF Energy warned that if the CARB amendments are enacted as written, they "will inevitably drive in-state refining capacity to zero."

Last week, Chevron called the amendments a "death knell" for remaining facilities, forecasting gasoline prices rising more than \$1 per gallon by 2030 and threatening to shutter its Richmond and El Segundo refineries.

And, while media continues to obfuscate on rising gas prices, blaming them on the Iran conflict, let us remind you that gas was already up .80 cents before the Iran warfare.

The Valero refinery in Benicia is already down, and has been since January 31, 2026. Media keeps reporting it will close in April, but the only thing still in operation, is the wastewater treatment plant, the dock, and a couple of areas of tank farms.

With the three oil company letters hitting Governor Newsom's

desk in less than a month, the proverbial organic substance should be hitting the electric wind machine any time now. But it's crickets... even Newsom's Rapid Response team is strangely silent.

The seriousness of three petroleum companies warning that proposed amendments to the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Cap-and-Invest program (cap and trade) would make California refineries "among the most expensive refineries to operate in the world," threatening widespread shutdowns, fuel shortages, skyrocketing prices, and massive economic damage, should warrant an emergency legislative session, at minimum, called by the governor.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has taken a great deal of liberty, particularly with its interpretation of AB 32. The CARB devised the cap-and-trade system whereby it holds a quarterly auction program requiring selected California employers to bid significant amounts of money for the privilege of continuing to pollute — or be faced with closing their doors.

California's cap-and-trade program places a "cap" on aggregate greenhouse gas emissions from businesses and utilities deemed "polluters" by the California Air Resources Board, which the CARB says are responsible for most of the state's greenhouse gas emissions. And do not forget that CARB's cap and trade program Western Climate Initiative Inc. was registered in Delaware, and not in California.

Oil and energy companies have been warning California's Democrat lawmakers for many years, but the climate change was just a bright shiny object distracting lawmakers from their due their due diligence on the potential for economic devastation if they actually ran oil and gas out of the state — especially when

California has all of the oil and gas we need, and plenty to sell.

Remember, Gov. Newsom tried to claim for the longest time that the state's highest-in-the-nation gas taxes and prices are not what led to dramatically spiking gas/oil prices but because of price gouging by the oil industry. In May, Newsom even signed a gas price gouging law into place.

He's silent on that front now. While Governor Newsom touts his "success" on national and international stages, he is presiding over perhaps the largest collapse of the oil industry, refinery operations and gasoline production in U.S. history.

California is now importing over 70% of its crude from foreign sources, and 30% of that is from the Middle East. Why?

The question should be, why hasn't someone in the media asked the governor that question. And the answer is not "climate change."

Gov. Newsom, the Legislature and State Air Resources Board have been working hand in glove to restrict the availability of oil and gas and increase the cost of gas at the pump so severely, middle class and working class drivers will be making choices between groceries and fuel for the car, if they aren't already. ■

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