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Position: United States was right to withdraw

This position addresses the topic United States withdrawal from the Paris Agreement.

For this position

The Paris agreement stood in the way of President Trump's efforts to eliminate these costly carbon dioxide rules. But this would be the least of its harm. A report released in March by NERA Economic Consulting suggests that the climate deal could cost the U.S. economy nearly \$3 trillion and more than 6 million industrial sector jobs by 2040.

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From Paris deal harms U.S. prosperity, by Roger Wicker (USA Today, June 1, 2017) (view)

Even if one accepts, for the sake of argument, the alarmist interpretation of climate-change data, the Paris Agreement is unlikely to produce the desired result — and may not produce any result at all. Two countries that are responsible for a large share of greenhouse-gas emissions — China and India, the world largest and fourth-largest carbon dioxide emitters, respectively — have made only modest commitments under the agreement, which puts most of the onus on the more developed nations of North America and Western Europe.

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From We'll Never Have Paris, by National Review editorial board (*National Review*, June 1, 2017) (view)

As Danish economist Bjorn Lomborg notes, it entails costs of over \$1 trillion a year to shave 0.36 degrees Fahrenheit off global temperatures by 2100 — a tenth the reduction it said is necessary. The better response, Lomborg argues, is massive R&D in non-carbon power — so that humanity needn't impoverish itself to "save the planet." As he pursues smart post-Paris policies, Trump ought to boost outlays for "green energy" R&D. America has far cleaner air and water than it did 50 years ago, and more parkland. It should continue those trends, and keep reducing its carbon emissions — democratically.

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From In ditching Paris deal, Trump does right by America and the world, by New York Post editorial board (*New York Post*, June 1, 2017) (view)

In his announcement today, Trump pledged to negotiate a different, better deal for American workers. If and when he does, he should depart from the Obama precedent, remember the Constitution, and submit that agreement for Senate ratification. Then he can perhaps build an enduring consensus. Then he can lead the free world the right way, by following the rule of law and hundreds of years of international legal norms.

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From Trump Defends the Constitution and the Economy by Withdrawing from the Paris Climate Agreement, by David French (*National Review*, June 1, 2017) (view)

Against this position

It is another indication of US readiness to abandon global leadership, and it is a gift to China, ambitious to be seen as a mature and reliable global player, and already a world leader in renewable energy technology. There will not be immediate consequences for the planet, but the time available for effective action is already perilously short; even the threat of a backward step by the world's second-largest emitter of greenhouse gases could carry serious consequences.

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From Galvanising the globe, by The Guardian editorial board (*The Guardian*, June 4, 2017) (view)

Don't tell me that they're honestly worried about the inherent uncertainty of climate projections. All long-term policy choices must be made in the face of an uncertain future (duh); there's as much scientific consensus here as you're ever likely to see on any issue. And in this case, uncertainty arguably strengthens the case for action, because the costs of getting it wrong are asymmetric: Do too much, and we've wasted some money; do too little, and we've doomed civilization.

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From Trump gratuitously rejects the Paris Climate Accord, by Paul Krugman (*The Seattle Times*, June 2, 2017) (view)

The biggest weakness in Trump's argument is that he's overlooking the main purpose of the Paris agreement: to protect the world from environmental catastrophe. There is a scientific consensus that global warming is a man-made threat to Earth, its habitats and its people. The climate is changing, seas are rising and the ice caps are shrinking. Habitats are at risk, and the main cause is greenhouse gas emissions. The Paris deal, adopted in late 2015, represented the first time the world's governments agreed they all have a responsibility to limit pollution spewing from power generating stations, vehicles and other sources.

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From Trump is wrong on climate change, by Chicago Tribune editorial board (*Chicago Tribune*, June 2, 2017) (view)

In making his reckless decision, Trump defied the advice of the world's leading climate scientists. Of Pope Francis and other religious leaders. Of the leaders of the seven wealthiest democracies. Of major corporations, including Chevron, Google, Facebook and Apple. Of members of his own inner circle, including son-in-law Jared Kushner and daughter Ivanka. Of his own secretary of State, a former ExxonMobil CEO.

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From Paris pullout endangers the planet, by USA Today editorial board (*USA Today*, June 1, 2017) (view)

But if withdrawing from the agreement will not make Mr. Trump's domestic policies any worse than they are, it is still a terrible decision that could have enormous consequences globally. In huge neon letters, it sends a clear message that this president knows nothing or cares little about the science underlying the stark warnings of environmental disruption. That he knows or cares little about the problems that disruption could bring, especially in poor countries. That he is unmindful that America, historically the world's biggest emitter of carbon dioxide, has a special obligation to help the rest of the world address these issues.

From Our Disgraceful Exit From the Paris Accord, by The New York Times editorial board (*The New York Times*, June 1, 2017) (view)

Trump's decision does not invalidate the entire agreement. But a U.S. withdrawal frees the world's other industrial states to back off their own commitments. It removes the U.S. from playing a lead role in ensuring that other nations reported their emissions accurately. And its sends a signal to businesses here and abroad that the Trump administration will not be a partner in growing the clean-energy sector and in encouraging more sustainable development.

From Another Trump rant and foolish decision on climate change, by Tampa Bay Times editorial board (*Tampa Bay Times*, June 1, 2017) (view)

Climate change is real, and human activity contributes to it: Among climate scientists, there is consensus on this subject. Climate change is also a clear and present danger to our physical security, the global food supply, and the way we live. The Paris accord represented the world's best hope of restraining global temperature increases.

From In exiting Paris accord, President Trump squanders time and degrees, by Detroit Free Press editorial board (*Detroit Free Press*, June 1, 2017) (view)

America first? The natural gas, wind and solar industries in the U.S. already employ more than five times as many American workers as the coal industry, which has been in serious decline for decades. It's bad enough that Trump's decision may lead other countries to drop out of the accord, but it's worse that it will jeopardize America's standing in the world as well as its position in the global economy. Now it appears China, which has committed to lessening its reliance on coal, will be revered globally as a climate-action leader.

From Trump's Paris climate accord withdrawal worst decision of his life, by The San Diego Union-Tribune editorial board (*The San Diego Union-Tribune*, June 1, 2017) (view)

Trump's decision is wrong for a host of reasons: Most obviously, it will undermine the accord itself, giving other key nations an excuse to back off from their climate targets. If that happens, efforts to slow global warming will be fatally wounded. It's important that the rest of the world, including Canada, stick to the accord regardless of where Trump takes the United States.

From Dumping Paris accord is Donald Trump's worst move ever, by Toronto Star editorial board (*Toronto Star*, June 1, 2017) (view)

Mr. Trump famously called global warming a hoax during the campaign, and with this decision he's wagering that he was actually right — he's calling his own bluff. No line of argument in the physical world supports his claim, and no credible authority backs him, not here and not abroad. It's telling that he simultaneously wants to cut the funding for the satellites and ocean buoys that monitor our degrading climate. Every piece of data they collect makes clear his foolishness.

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From Trump's Stupid and Reckless Climate Decision, by Bill McKibben ($\it The New York Times$, June 1, 2017) (view)

Mixed on this position

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