



# News Release

## Paris Withdrawal: A Disservice to the Global Environment and American Business

**June 1, 2017**—[The Environmental and Energy Study Institute](http://www.eesi.org) (EESI) deeply regrets President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement.

"Seventy-six years ago, the United States led the free world in defeating an existential menace. Today, the world is confronted with another existential menace: climate change. But instead of stepping up to the plate and assuming its leadership role, the United States is shirking its responsibilities. The rest of the world must not succumb to the same mistake, but rally to defend the agreement," said EESI Chair Jared Blum.

According to Carol Werner, EESI's Executive Director, "Withdrawing from the Paris Climate Agreement is analogous to 'cutting off one's nose to spite one's face.' Such action cedes global leadership to China and Europe, which are announcing their plans to jointly step up their roles. It also flies in the face of the many cities, states, and companies across the country that are committed to moving forward on clean energy, resilience and adaptation because that is what makes sense economically. And Trump's action ignores the majority of Americans across the country who have consistently supported the Paris Climate Agreement and who want the United States to take more action and leadership on climate change. This action does not make America great."

"As a business stakeholder participant in numerous U.N. climate meetings over the past twenty years, I saw first-hand the ability of U.S. negotiators at those meetings to promote global policies ensuring American technology and business interests would benefit from U.S. leadership in those forums," noted Jared Blum. "Abandoning the Paris Agreement is essentially abandoning American economic interests at a critical time as the remainder of the world moves toward confronting climate issues."

The Paris Agreement calls on the world's nations to keep global warming significantly below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) by transitioning to cleaner energy sources and by promoting energy efficiency. With almost universal support from the world's nations, the Paris Agreement entered into force in record time in October 2016. At present, 195 nations have signed the Agreement, with only two countries not participating: Syria (whose government is subject to international sanctions and travel restrictions) and Nicaragua (which felt the Agreement did not go far enough).

"The Trump Administration's decision is certainly a setback for global climate action, and a setback for America's influence in the world. By backing out despite pleas from its allies and friends, the United States is indicating that its word cannot be trusted," said Carol Werner. "We should have learned our lesson: this is the second time the United States has signed but then walked away from a major climate agreement. President George W. Bush failed to anticipate the strong pushback he would receive after he left the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, and the diplomatic fallout continued throughout his entire presidency. I expect the same thing will happen again, making it more difficult for the United States to achieve its international goals. Moreover, the United States may lose countless economic and business opportunities, domestically and internationally, as a result—harming our global relations and our ability to compete."

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"The Paris Climate Agreement depends on peer pressure to succeed, as there is no enforcement mechanism," noted Carol Werner. "Unfortunately, by withdrawing from the Agreement, the United States is reducing the pressure on other nations to live up to their commitments, which undermines the hard-won global consensus to act against climate change." The United States has until recently been the largest emitter of carbon dioxide, and its pledges made up 21 percent of the total emissions cuts laid out in the Paris Agreement.

Following Trump's electoral victory, more than 190 countries and the European Union reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement in the Marrakech Action Proclamation of November 2016. China, India, and the European Union have all announced their determination to stick to their pledges. It is critical that they do so, as time is running out: 2016 was the hottest year on record, following on the heels of 2014 and 2015, which were both record-breaking as well.

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***The Environmental and Energy Study Institute** ([www.eesi.org](http://www.eesi.org)) is an independent, non-profit organization advancing innovative policy solutions to set us on a cleaner, more secure and sustainable energy path. EESI educates policymakers, builds coalitions and develops policy in support of energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable biomass, sustainable buildings, and sustainable transportation. EESI was founded by a bipartisan Congressional caucus in 1984, and its strong relationship with Congress helps EESI serve as a trusted source of credible, non-partisan information on energy and environmental issues. EESI receives no congressional funding and is supported through contributions and grants.*