



Briefing Notice

Climate Impacts in the Midwest: Becoming More Resilient

Thursday, July 17, 2014

2:30 PM – 4 PM

406 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Please RSVP to expedite check-in: www.eesi.org/071714midwest#rsvp

Live webcast (connection permitting) will be streamed at: www.eesi.org/livecast

The **Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI)** invites you to a briefing examining the current and projected impacts of climate change in the Midwest, as well as strategies being developed to mitigate the associated risks. The Midwest (defined in the National Climate Assessment as Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio) has about 20 percent of the nation's population, and produces 19 percent of the nation's GDP. According to the **Third National Climate Assessment (NCA)**, climate change has wide-reaching impacts in the region, affecting the agricultural industry, the Great Lakes, northern forests, the energy system, and public health, generally in detrimental ways. In addition, the Midwest's economy is highly energy-intensive, releasing 22 percent more greenhouse gas emissions per capita than the U.S. average. Briefing speakers will discuss how reducing emissions and taking action to improve the resilience and adaptation of Midwest communities, businesses, and farms can help mitigate climate change-exacerbated economic and social stresses. Speakers for this forum are:

- **Dr. Rosina Bierbaum**, Professor of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy, University of Michigan; National Climate Assessment Author
- **Mayor James Brainard**, Carmel, IN; Member of White House Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience
- **Larry Falkin**, Director of the Office of Environment & Sustainability, City of Cincinnati, OH
- **Jeremy Emmi**, Managing Director, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Midwest agriculture had a value of \$135.6 billion and produced 65 percent of U.S. corn and soybeans in 2012, but faces a 19 percent decline by mid-century without action to mitigate the impacts of climate change [according to the *Risky Business Report*, commissioned by Michael Bloomberg, Henry Paulson and Tom Steyer]. Future crop yields and economic activity in the region are threatened by increasing numbers of floods, droughts, heat waves, and late spring freezes. The Midwest is also home to a thriving tourism industry, drawn to the Great Lakes and northern forests. However, pollution and the pressure of invasive species, compounded by changing pest and disease prevalence, is disturbing these ecosystems. Forest composition is changing, and the Great Lakes are experiencing increased algal blooms which harm water quality, habitats and aesthetics.

Public health is a risk issue as well, as a majority of the Midwest's population lives in cities which will experience increased humidity, heat waves and flooding, as well as worsening air and water quality. During 2011, eleven of the fourteen \$1 billion+ weather-related disasters affected the Midwest. The NCA projects an increase in the frequency and intensity of these extreme weather events.

This event is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact Laura Small at lsmall@eesi.org or (202) 662-1892.

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