

Trump and the Climate Crisis

By Brooke Brewer, a student at Auburn University

This is an opinion column.

Climate change is the most important issue facing humanity and the climate can not survive another Trump presidential term. We need to protect ourselves from climate change because it is already here and hurting us. As global temperatures increase, widespread shifts in weather systems occur, making events like droughts, hurricanes, and floods more intense. Throughout Donald Trump's first term as president, he has demonstrated a reckless disregard for climate change and environmental protections. The Trump administration has consistently prioritized short-term economic gains over the long-term health of our planet.

To start, Donald Trump has long questioned man-made climate change and he has called it a “[hoax](#)” on video multiple times in the past. Despite Trump saying that climate change is not real, in 2018 his administration released a [1,600 page National Climate Assessment](#) stating that lower-income communities have a lower capacity to prepare for extreme weather and climate-related events. A clear acknowledgment of the issue from his administration is noteworthy but given Trump’s statements on the assessment and his repetitive denial of climate science, it’s obvious that he does not support the work done in the assessment. Humans face new challenges for survival because of climate change, so Trump's complete disregard for climate change is extremely alarming.

During Trump's years as president, the United States withdrew from the Paris Agreement, repealed the Clean Power Plan, promoted coal production and offshore drilling, and rolled back restrictions on methane emissions. In addition to this, he also lifted bans on oil and gas exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, coastal waters around the United States, and in areas formerly protected as National Monuments in Utah. The Trump administration has dismantled major climate policies and repealed more than 100 environmental rules governing clean air, water, wildlife, and toxic chemicals. Trump's policy plans are not clear but his allies and advisers have suggested that the [plan](#) for his second term is even more extreme for the environment than his first.

A second Trump presidency would condemn us to a future of environmental chaos and ecological collapse. We can not afford to ignore the irreversible damage to our planet that has already been done and we must create a better planet for future generations. But by electing leaders who prioritize the health of our planet and the well-being of future generations, we can forge a path toward a safer, more sustainable world.