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On September 17, the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology held another hearing to discuss the Obama Administration's Climate Action Plan. Committee members focused their questions on the new Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Power Plan, which would require power plants to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030. John Holdren, Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, and Janet McCabe, Acting Assistant Administrator of the EPA Office of Air and Radiation acted as witnesses.

The discussion became acrimonious at times. Several members questioned the validity of climate change studies and whether increased carbon dioxide would have a direct effect on human health. Mr. Holdren and Ms. McCabe explained that rising temperatures would have long-term impacts; for example, higher temperatures would increase the risk of heart attack.

Republican committee members expressed further concern that the proposed rule could threaten American jobs and economic growth and lead to higher energy costs for small businesses and low-income or elderly citizens. Chairman Lamar Smith (R-TX) questioned the witnesses on whether regulation would be effective in combating climate change if nations like China continue polluting at their present rate. Ms. McCabe responded that "it takes many small actions to make an impact."

Rep. Swalwell (D-CA) pointed to Germany's success in transitioning to renewable energy, and both witnesses reminded committee members that the economy has tripled since the Clean Air Act was passed in 1970. The witnesses argued that energy costs for consumers are likely to go down due to increasing energy efficiency.

This June, a White House released a report on the status of implementing the Climate Action Plan, which was first introduced on June 25, 2013.
