

From CEI:

Last week, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy testified twice before House subcommittees in defense of [her agency's FY2016 budget](#). As I explained [here](#), she deftly negotiated those two hearings, using a skillful combination of obfuscation and mendacity.

This week, Administrator McCarthy appeared before the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee to again defend her agency's budget. This time around, however, things didn't go so smoothly.

For starters, I suspect she was caught off guard by the strategy adopted by EPW Chairman James Mountain Inhofe. In previous EPA FY2016 budget hearings, Members of Congress questioned specific *policies* adopted by EPA; Sen. Inhofe, by contrast, attacked the agency's *priorities*. In particular, he questioned why EPA's FY2016 makes climate change mitigation the agency's #1 priority, when administrator McCarthy herself concedes that EPA's policies won't affect the climate. She didn't have an answer for this line of reasoning, and I think it threw her off.

However, she became most flustered during an intense exchange with Sen. Jeff Sessions. He started out by decrying the agency's request for a 6% increase in funding, when inflation is 2.5%. He said that he couldn't justify such an increase to his constituents, for whom EPA was routinely cited as the #1 problem. He told her, "you are apparently unaware of the pushback that's occurring in the real world."

Then he moved to the science behind the agency's Clean Power Plan. Sessions first asked whether McCarthy disputed research demonstrating that droughts and hurricanes had not increased; she refused to answer, and grew visibly agitated with the questioning. What followed was the highlight of their dialogue—a back-and-forth during which Administrator McCarthy refused to concede the well-established fact that climate models have overstated global warming. I've reposted the transcript below.

SEN. SESSIONS: And would you acknowledge that the -- and over the last 18 years that the increase in temperature has been very little and that it is well below -- as a matter of fact, 90 percent below -- most of the environmental models that showed how fast temperature would increase?

ADMINISTRATOR MCCARTHY: No, I would not agree with that, Sir. A one degree temperature is significant. I don't know what you're looking at.

SEN. SESSIONS: No, no, no. I'm asking you is [the actual temperature record] below the models or above the models?

ADMINISTRATOR MCCARTHY: I do not know what the models actually are predicting that you are referring to. There are many models and sometimes it's actually going faster, and sometimes slightly slower than the model protect predicts. But on the whole, it makes no difference to the validity and the robustness of climate science that is telling us that we are facing an absolute challenge that we must address both environmentally, economically, from a national security perspective. And for EPA, from a public health perspective.

SEN. SESSIONS: All right. Well, let me -- of course, carbon pollution is CO<sub>2</sub>, and that's really not a pollutant. It's a plant food, and it doesn't harm anybody except that it might include temperature increases. So let me ask you one more time, are you asserting -- just give me this answer. If you take the average of the models predicting how fast the temperature would increase, is the temperature, in fact, increasing less than that or more than that?

ADMINISTRATOR MCCARTHY: I cannot answer that question specifically.

SEN. SESSIONS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I just would say this is a stunning development that the head of the Environmental Protection Agency, who should know more than anybody else in the world, who's imposing hundreds of billions of dollars in cost to prevent this climate temperature increases doesn't whether their projections have been right or wrong.