

January 8th, 2019

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of State of Texas
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

Cc: Jon Niermann, Chairman, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Dear Governor Abbott,

At a press conference last month to discuss a new report on the impacts of Hurricane Harvey, a reporter asked you whether man-made climate change has played a role in Texas' weather disasters.¹ You replied that it would be impossible for you to say, as you are not a scientist.

We, the undersigned, are climate scientists and experts, and can report to you that climate change is happening, it is primarily caused by humans, and it is having a devastating impact on Texas, including increasing deadly flooding resulting from Hurricane Harvey.

Furthermore, the recently released National Climate Assessment, put together by more than a dozen federal agencies and more than 300 scientists found that, left unchecked, climate change will have dangerous results for the Southern Great Plains, which includes Texas. The report finds:

- Annual average temperatures will increase by 3.6°–5.1°F by the mid-21st century and by 4.4°–8.4°F by the late 21st century
- An additional 30–60 days per year above 100°F than we currently experience
- Higher temperatures could result in an additional 1,300 deaths per year by the end of the century
- Extreme heat will pose health risks to outdoor agricultural workers, with some communities “projected to lose more than 6% in annual labor hours by the end of the century”
- Sea level rise along the western Gulf of Mexico “is likely to be greater than the projected global average of 1–4 feet or more. Such a change, along with the related retreat of the Gulf coastline, will exacerbate risks and impacts from storm surges.”
- Up to \$20.9 billion in coastal property is projected to be flooded at high tide by 2030
- The Edwards Aquifer will suffer from “a decrease of water supply during droughts, a degradation of habitat for species of concern, economic effects, and the interconnectivity of these impacts.”

We can take actions now to help us adapt to the impacts of climate change. And, as one of the biggest wind energy producers in the U.S., we can also play a key role in reducing the emissions that will drive future changes in the climate. The only thing missing is leadership.

We therefore request the opportunity to brief you on the climate science and the need for the State of Texas to take immediate action to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

¹ Anna Kuchment, Dec. 13th, 2018, “Hurricane Harvey report seeks to 'future-proof' Texas from climate change without saying so directly”, <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/climate-change-1/2018/12/13/hurricane-harvey-report-seeks-future-proof-texas-climate-change-without-saying-directly>

Sincerely,

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