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AMERICAN PETROLEUM INSTITUTE'S BLATANT HYPOCRISY ON CLIMATE ACTION



Washington, D.C. – Not even hours after declaring an intent to work with President Joe Biden on the urgent need to address the climate crisis, the American Petroleum Institute has reverted to a similar – and hypocritical – playbook to falsely decry any action on climate as a job killer.

At the same time it was “praising” Biden's decision to rejoin the Paris Agreement, API was spreading lies about the Keystone XL Pipeline and the impacts of drilling on public lands. To bolster its scare tactic-fueled campaign, API started running an attack ad from its Energy Citizens front group making false claims about the benefits of oil and gas for local communities.

“This is hardly surprising behavior from API, which has spent years lying to the public by acknowledging the need for climate action in the press but then wielding its money and influence to halt even minute progress on the climate crisis,” said **Climate Power Senior Advisor Noreen Nielsen**. “API, and the oil and gas industry it shills for, has taken billions of taxpayer dollars only to turn around and lay off workers, pollute communities' air and water, and create roadblocks for any leader trying to make progress to address the greatest threat of our time.”

API has a long history of hypocritical and blatantly false tactics to wrongly paint climate action as being bad for the economy when in fact investments in clean energy would create good-paying jobs that often pay more than the average energy job and support frontline communities.

It is critical to call API's bait-and-switch campaign out as the organization casts itself as a good-faith actor on climate action when in fact API has no intention to work with Biden on climate action. Instead, API is focused on protecting its bottom line – even if it means financially supporting the Republican members who helped incite the deadly riot on the U.S. Capitol that left five people dead.

Below is a summary of some of API's most egregious lies and hypocrisy that highlights the extreme lengths API will go to stop any climate action:

- **Follow the money:** API claims to “support the ambitions” of the Paris Agreement but gave more than \$50,000 to House of Representatives members who voted against the goals of the agreement.
- **Backing right-wing extremists:** API President Mike Sommers called the Jan. 6 attacks on the Capitol “heartbreaking” and “absolutely sickening,” yet Sommers personally contributed \$5,600 to Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, whom Rep. Mo Brooks called “part of the team” trying to overturn the results of the election. API further contributed \$133,500 to members of the Sedition Caucus. Sommers said “the parties responsible [for the insurrection] should be held accountable,” yet refuses to acknowledge his organization's role in enabling the lawmakers who incited it.
- **Misplaced priorities:** API frequently touts the oil and gas industries' efforts to lower emissions all while funding an aggressive lobbying campaign to urge the Trump administration to roll back protections against greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Misleading the public:** API has faced consumer fraud lawsuits from Minnesota, Delaware, the District of Columbia, and Hoboken, NJ alleging that it misled the public about the dangers of climate change. Responding to the suits, API's lawyer said “the record of the past two decades demonstrates that the industry has achieved its goal of providing affordable, reliable American energy to U.S. consumers while substantially reducing emissions and our environmental footprint.” However, recent research warns that emissions might rise by 30% by 2025.
- **A “Climate Progress” ad campaign:** API is publicly running an ad campaign about a clean energy future while privately promising to fight significant policies to address the climate crisis. API even recently lost a major oil member because it's too out of step in its refusal to address climate change.
- **We've seen this before:** Just days before Barack Obama's 2009 inauguration, API CEO Jack Gerard said about climate change: “we

intend to be part of the solution and look forward to a continuing dialogue on meeting this global challenge." Then they ran a series of ads attacking climate change legislation, spent millions lobbying against its passage, and organized rallies in 20 states to oppose the progress.

- **A “citizen” front-group for oil and gas:** API's Energy Citizens campaign is running an ad about oil and gas contributing to school funding, even though they lobbied to lower the rates that oil and gas producers pay towards local school budgets.
- **“Real people” played by actors:** API's Energy Citizens campaign tries to frame their arguments in terms of real people, like “Ben” who was featured in an ad about oil and gas workers. Ben was actually played by actor Rigo Nova, who also played “Carlos” the bartender in the right-wing dystopian fantasy film “Obamaland Part 1: Rise of the Trumpublikans.”
- **Spreading misinformation:** API has U.S. Senators spreading its debunked talking point that “as a result of greater use of clean-burning natural gas,” the U.S. is “a world leader in reducing carbon emissions and other air pollutants.” In reality, the U.S. has cut a much lower percentage of its total emissions than other countries, largely because of API's decades of deceiving the public on climate science and lobbying against climate action.
- **Funding science denial:** API claims to support policies that “continue to advance understanding of global climate change.” In reality, the organization funds groups and campaigns that peddle climate misinformation, discredit established climate science, and attack climate scientists.



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