

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

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**MEMORANDUM**

**July 31, 2020**

**To: Members of the Committee on Oversight and Reform**

**Fr: Committee Staff**

**Re: Full Committee Hearing on “The Devastating Health Impacts of Climate Change”**

On Wednesday, August 5, 2020, at 11:00 a.m., in room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building and over WebEx, the Committee will hold a hearing on the health impacts of climate change.

**I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Climate change poses a grave threat to our nation’s public health. It is already having—and will continue to have—an impact on individual Americans, vulnerable communities, the health care infrastructure, and the U.S. economy.

The House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis recently warned in its June 2020 Staff Report:

The climate crisis is a public health threat multiplier. Climate change can affect human health in myriad ways: by intensifying heat waves, floods, and other extreme weather events; by degrading air quality; and by increasing the risk of infectious disease emergence and spread. The effects of climate change on human health can include a range of undesirable outcomes, such as worsening respiratory and cardiac conditions and impacts to mental health. Increases in air pollution or heat exposure related to climate change are also associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes, with Black mothers at particularly high risk of preterm birth and lower birth weight. Health issues and emergencies caused by surging climate impacts can strain the capacity of hospitals, public health professionals, and the entire health sector.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, Staff Report, *Solving the Climate Crisis: The Congressional Action Plan for a Clean Energy Economy and a Healthy, Resilient, and Just America* (June 2020) (online at <https://climatecrisis.house.gov/sites/climatecrisis.house.gov/files/Climate%20Crisis%20Action%20Plan.pdf>).

The hearing will examine the impact of climate change on health and will include testimony from noted experts on the projected risks of failing to adequately address climate change.

## **II. WITNESSES**

### **Dr. Drew Shindell**

Nicholas Distinguished Professor of Earth Science  
Duke University

### **Dr. Michael Greenstone**

Milton Friedman Distinguished Service Professor  
in Economics, the College, and the Harris School  
Department of Economics  
University of Chicago

### **Dr. Neeta Thakur**

Medical Director  
Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital Chest Clinic  
University of California, San Francisco

### **Dr. Renee N. Salas**

Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine  
Harvard Medical School

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