

Trump has attempted to disavow the unpopular Project 2025 and distance himself from the Heritage Foundation, the primary author. In the meantime, another think tank has risen to prominence in Trump World, the [America First Policy Institute](#). It is poised to play a major role in his transition team. The AFPI's views aren't expressed as stridently but share Project 2025's philosophy. In its attack on the administrative state, the AFPI seems if anything more radical than Project 2025.

In terms of energy and environment, AFPI stresses energy dominance, meaning a massive buildout of oil and gas production. The theme is that the U.S. must "become an energy superpower by exporting America's energy abundance." AFPI scoffs at renewable energy, which it says "is not readily available, or sufficiently reliable, to supply the combined needs of our Nation." That means maxing oil and gas, which are "central to America's energy ecosystem."

AFPI rejects clean energy policies because they "artificially undermine the viability of existing technologies such as coal and natural gas-fired power plants." AFPI portrays emphasis on renewable energy as "at odds with our national security and economic interests and with the human, strategic, or environmental realities underpinning our modern energy systems."

The heart of the problem, according to AFPI, is a "climate-above-all outlook" stemming from "climate alarmists." AFPI deplores the Biden Administration's "myopic focus on climate change as a justification for its sweeping radical agenda and massive government expansion." Not surprisingly, AFPI demands U.S. withdrawal from the Paris agreement, which it calls "lopsided, unenforceable, [and] America- last." Similarly, AFPI opposes "the SEC's proposed rule to mandate new environmental disclosures would entrench the Left's 'build-nothing' philosophy and threaten to stop infrastructure development in its tracks."

Heaven forbid that investors learn about a company's environmentally destructive activities!

Like Project 2025, AFPI calls for a large-scale attack on much of the current government: "America First approach requires us to reform the civil service to create accountability in the bureaucracy. It also requires us to dismantle the administrative state and achieve the elusive goal of balancing the federal budget."

Going well beyond Project 2025, AFPI advocates virtual elimination of Civil Service protections for government employees: "To protect the government's democratic accountability—as well as to remove poor performers from the federal workforce—the federal government should return to at-will employment." The only right of a fired civil

servant would be to get a second opinion from some other official, with no hearing or further recounsel. In other words, if someone is fired for being insufficiently MAGA, such as believing in climate change, another MAGA appointee would rubber-stamp the dismissal.

AFPI also calls for eliminating or severely curtailing the role of administrative law judges, requiring congressional approval for all major regulations or guidance documents, and eliminating independent agencies.

AFPI calls for repealing a host of federal legislation: "Congress or the courts should restrict federal regulatory agencies' jurisdiction to truly interstate economic activities. Regulation of matters that only indirectly affect interstate commerce should be left to states or local communities, which are better able to judge their unique needs." This approach would, for instance, eliminate federal anti-discrimination laws except for interstate transportation, as well as eliminating many environmental laws such as the Endangered Species Act.

In environment and energy policy, AFPI seems indistinguishable from Project 2025. The main difference is that AFPI goes into less detail about specific regulations it would eliminate or specific budget cuts, though it does endorse proposals by House Republicans to slash the budgets for environmental activities. But AFPI goes much further than Project 2025 in politicizing government agencies and in demands for deregulation. From the perspective of those who believe in environmental protection, switching from one rightwing think tank to another doesn't seem to be much of an improvement.