

U.S. Chamber of Commerce adopts “grassroots” organizing tactic, redoubles attacks on climate science and law | 1

The [Los Angeles Times reported last week that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) – a significant and strident voice in opposition to anything that our government might possibly do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions – is using its considerable financial resources to dramatically increase its constituent base through “grass-roots organizing,” and that its influence is rising. This development should concern anyone who believes that climate change is a problem worth addressing (and has motivated [several large corporations, including Exelon](#) and [Apple](#), to leave the Chamber, though others have apparently joined anew, according to the L.A. Times article).

And the U.S. Chamber just filed another in a series of challenges to every serious effort our government has made to combat the causes of climate change. The Chamber’s basic approach has been to attack everything: government policy, the laws that require the government to act, and the science behind government decisions. (Here’s the [Chamber’s blog on environmental issues](#), if anyone’s interested in what they have to say.)

The Chamber filed its latest attack today. Its [petition to EPA to reconsider its “endangerment finding”](#) follows on the heels of a court challenge against that same finding (see [Holly’s post about that here](#)), a demand last summer for an unprecedented “on-the-record” rulemaking proceeding that the U.S. Chamber’s policy director – in an ill-considered remark that he later regretted – compared to the Scopes monkey trial (see thoughts [by Holly](#) and [by me](#) about this), and – during the Bush administration – [pleas not to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act at all](#). (Here are some [general thoughts by Jonathan](#) about the Chamber’s approach.)

Although the proper policy choices for dealing with climate change are open to debate, the Chamber has been dead wrong on the law and on the science. There’s no serious question that the endangerment finding, and EPA’s other preparation to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act, are legally correct. And there’s no serious question about the damage that greenhouse gases are doing and will do to our world. Unfortunately, the Chamber’s rhetoric and tactics – especially in light of its efforts at grass-roots organizing – surely will help to spread disinformation about climate change and to promote skepticism about our government’s legitimate efforts to deal effectively with climate change’s causes.