

# PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES REACT TO PARIS CLIMATE ACCORD

## REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES

### GOV. JEB BUSH

**Gov. Bush Was “Uncertain” If He Would Have Attended Paris Climate Talks, Adding That The “Movement” For Solutions To Climate Change “Is Toward Policies That Would Hurt Our Economy.”** During a December 1, 2015 campaign stop in Waterloo, Iowa, Gov. Bush said that he was “uncertain” whether he would have attended the international climate summit in Paris. Gov. Bush said, “I worry about the economic impact for our country ... I worry that — put aside intentions — these proposals [such as a tax on carbon pollution] could have an impact on the here-and-now on people that are really struggling right now,” Bush added. “I’d be uncertain whether I would attend a meeting like that where it seems like the movement is toward policies that would hurt our economy.” [Associated Press, [12/1/15](#)]

### DR. BEN CARSON

**Dr. Carson May Have Attended Paris Climate Talks If He Were President, But Added That Despite The Multinational Agreement, Climate Change “Would Not Be His Priority As President.”** On December 14, 2015, Sky News reported, “Republican presidential hopeful Ben Carson has told Sky News that despite the climate change deal in Paris, the issue would not be his priority as President. Dr. Carson, who has suffered a recent slip in the polls, said he would treat the issue with ‘the significance it deserves.’ ‘It would not be the overarching driver of my policies. There’s always been change going on,’ he said. He added that although he may have attended the talks if he were President, he did not consider it the ‘premier issue in the world, and the cause of terrorism and everything.’” [Sky News, [12/14/15](#)]

### GOV. CHRIS CHRISTIE

**Gov. Christie: For President Obama, Paris Climate Summit Was “Clearly A Play For That Second Nobel Peace Prize, That’s What It’s All About.”** At a December 5, 2015 campaign stop in Mason City, Iowa, Gov. Christie “forcefully attacked President Obama’s and the Democrats’ climate agenda,” saying, “This climate change thing is clearly a play for that second Nobel Peace Prize, that’s what it’s all about ... He wants to get one he might actually have the excuse for, as opposed to the first one, which he got just because he gave a good speech at the U.N.” [Washington Examiner, [12/5/15](#)]

**Gov. Christie: President Obama Traveling To Paris For Climate Talks Is “Insulting.”** On November 30, 2015, CNN reported, “New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie criticized the President at a business roundtable ... questioning Obama’s belief that ‘climate change is the American imperative for leadership.’ ‘Say what you want about the nearly now 250,000 Syrians that have been murdered by their own government,’ Christie said. ‘I can guarantee you this, they aren’t worrying about climate change anymore, if they ever were.’ Christie went on to condemn Obama’s travels to Paris Monday as ‘insulting.’ ‘It’s insulting, to the position that he holds, it’s insulting even more to the responsibilities that are his, for him to be talking about this stuff right now. Rather than trying to unite the world against ISIS, rather than trying to find a solution in Syria, rather than worrying about how we protect the homeland in a way that’s effective, he’s talking about this other stuff.’” [CNN, [11/30/15](#)]

### SEN. TED CRUZ

**Sen. Cruz Chaired A Hearing Casting Doubt On The Science Behind Climate Change; Timing Of Hearing Was “No Coincidence,” And Was Meant To Undercut President Obama’s Attempt To Achieve A Climate Agreement In Paris.** On

December 8, 2015, Sen. Cruz chaired a hearing of the Senate Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness. According to the [Washington Times](#), the timing of Sen. Cruz's hearing was "no coincidence. Mr. Cruz's hearing comes as the latest in a series of moves making it clear to the international community that the Republican-controlled Congress isn't on board with President Obama's effort to cement his legacy with a deal at the Paris climate conference." At the hearing, Sen. Cruz said, "According to the satellite data, there has been no significant global warming for the past 18 years. Those are the data. The global-warming alarmists don't like these data. They are inconvenient to their narrative. But facts and evidence matters." [Senate Commerce Committee, [12/8/15](#); LexisNexis, [12/8/15](#); [Washington Times](#), [12/7/15](#)]

## **CARLY FIORINA**

**Fiorina: "No, I Don't Think It's Particularly Productive" For President Obama To Go To Paris For Climate Talks.** On November 29, 2015, Fiorina appeared on Fox News Sunday. During the interview, she had the following exchange with host Chris Wallace:

**WALLACE:** Do you think it's worthwhile for [President Obama] to go to Paris, to go to this international summit and try to work out emissions limits?

**FIORINA:** Well, look, if you read the fine print of the science, what the scientists tell us, all those scientists who say climate change is real and manmade, they also tell us that a single nation acting alone can make no difference at all. That it would take a concerted global effort over 30 years, costing trillions of dollars. I think the likelihood of that is near zero. So, no, I don't think it's particularly productive. I think it would be far more productive if President Obama instead was there leading an international coalition to stop human trafficking or an international coalition for humanitarian relief for the refugees or an international coalition to defeat ISIS. All those would be more useful than time in Paris spent talking about climate change.

[Fox News, [11/29/15](#)]

## **GOV. MIKE HUCKABEE**

**Gov. Huckabee: Paris Climate Accord Was A "Sprawling, Unenforceable Deal"; "Already There's Friction? Know What Cures Friction? Oil."** On December 12, 2015, "nearly 200 countries cemented a major international accord to fight global warming ... capping years of fractious negotiations that dragged on even as evidence of the dangers of runaway greenhouse-gas pollution mounted ... The breakthrough tethers non-binding national pledges to limit carbon-dioxide emissions with more formal agreements that enable monitoring and verification of countries' actions to ensure trust. Nations will also submit new plans every five years, a key provision that acknowledges that existing national pledges are nowhere near tough enough to prevent highly dangerous levels of global warming. The accord sets a goal of a global peak in greenhouse-gas emissions 'as soon as possible' and holding the rise in global temperatures to 'well below' 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times, a benchmark for avoiding many of most dangerous consequences of climate change." Responding to the agreement, Gov. Huckabee tweeted, "195 nations sign a sprawling, unenforceable deal, and already there's friction? Know what cures friction? Oil." [National Journal, [12/12/15](#); @GovMikeHuckabee Twitter, [12/14/15](#)]

**Gov. Huckabee Op-Ed: President Obama Visiting Paris For Climate Talks Shows That His "National Security Priorities Are Dangerous."** In a December 1, 2015 Fox News op-ed, Gov. Huckabee wrote, "President Obama's national security priorities are dangerous. Two weeks after terrorist attacks rocked Paris, he is visiting France, not to focus on fighting global terrorism, but to tackle the global warming "security imperative." America needs a commander-in-chief, not a weather-obsessed meteorologist-in-chief ... Now more than ever, America needs a commander-in-chief focused on the global war on terrorism, instead we have a community organizer focused on global warming. Obama's blindness is beyond baffling, it's dangerous." [Mike Huckabee op-ed, Fox News, [12/1/15](#)]

## **GOV. JOHN KASICH**

**Gov. Kasich Would Attend Climate Summit In Paris, “But I’d Be Spending My Time Trying To Build A Coalition To Fight ISIS.”** On December 1, 2015, NPR reported, “Speaking in Knoxville, Tenn., Ohio Gov. John Kasich ... said if he were president, he would attend the climate change summit, but ‘I’d be spending my time trying to build a coalition to fight ISIS. It seems as though they’re a lot more passionate at this point about climate change than they are the real problem that faces us today.’ Kasich said he believes human activity does influence the climate, ‘but to what degree we don’t know.’” [NPR, [12/1/15](#)]

## **GOV. GEORGE PATAKI**

**Gov. Pataki: Paris Climate Accord Was “Mostly Symbolic,” But A “Positive Development” Nonetheless.** In December 2015, Gov. Pataki acknowledged that the Paris climate agreement was a “positive development” that was “mostly symbolic.” He added, “It is a shame we don’t see the same commitment from the Obama administration to address the present threat America faces from ISIS and radical Islam.” [New York Times, [12/14/15](#)]

## **SEN. RAND PAUL**

**Sen. Paul: President Obama Linking Climate Change And Terrorism Was Politically Opportunistic.** On November 30, 2015, Sen. Paul tweeted, “@POTUS’s recent comments linking climate change and terrorism are the most outlandish examples of political opportunism and demagoguery.” [@RandPaul Twitter, [11/30/15](#)]

## **SEN. MARCO RUBIO**

**Sen. Rubio: Paris Climate Accord “Will Have No Meaningful Effect On Climate Change ... As President, I Will ... Ensure That Any Climate Agreement Impacting The American Economy Is Approved By Congress.”** Sen. Rubio’s campaign website states, “Today, President Obama meets in Paris with leaders from around the world to discuss what he and other leading Democrats consider possibly the gravest threat to our national security. Not ISIS, or Russia, or Iran’s pursuit of a nuclear weapon, or China’s aggressive posturing in international waters, or even North Korea’s nuclear weapons — but climate change. While international dialogue is an important step in addressing global challenges, President Obama is proposing to give away the store in order to reach an agreement that will have no meaningful effect on climate change ... The president’s promise to reduce U.S. emissions is based on the enactment of the illegal Clean Power Plan, which will increase energy costs and kill jobs throughout the country. He has also committed billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars to the “Green Climate Fund,” which developing nations will ostensibly use to mitigate the effects of climate change but which has no serious checks on how the money is used. And in return for wasting taxpayer money, killing American jobs, and stunting our economic growth, President Obama is likely to get a deal that allows China and other developing nations to continue polluting for years, with emissions caps that aren’t legally binding on the signatories. Of course, this is not surprising coming from the administration that negotiated the disastrous Iran deal ... As president, I will undo Obama’s illegal carbon mandates, ensure that any climate agreement impacting the American economy is approved by Congress, and promote the responsible development of American energy resources to power our economy and provide affordable energy for consumers while protecting our environment.” [Marco Rubio 2016 Press Release, [accessed 12/14/15](#)]

## **DONALD TRUMP**

**Trump “Would Have Skipped Paris Climate Summit.”** During a December 1, 2015 interview with NH1 News Network,

Trump said that he “would have skipped the Paris climate summit, arguing there were more important things to do.” Trump added that “terrorism is the country's biggest threat, not climate change, adding that he ‘probably would not have gone’ to Paris.” [The Hill, [12/1/15](#)]

**Trump: President’s Obama’s Assertion That Climate Change Was A Top Priority Was “One Of The Dumbest Statements I’ve Ever Heard In Politics.”** In December 2015, Donald Trump said, “While the world is in turmoil and falling apart in so many different ways, especially with ISIS, our president is worried about global warming.” Appearing on MSNBC’s Morning Joe, he said, “I think one of the dumbest statements I've ever heard in politics, in the history of politics as I know it, which is pretty good, was Obama's statement that our No. 1 problem is global warming.” [NBC News, [11/30/15](#); Los Angeles Times, [12/1/15](#)]

## DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES

### SEC. HILLARY CLINTON

**Sec. Clinton: “Ambitious” Paris Climate Agreement Was A “Testament To America’s Ability To Lead The World In Building A Clean Energy Future Where No One Is Left Out Or Left Behind.”** On December 12, 2015, “nearly 200 countries cemented a major international accord to fight global warming ... capping years of fractious negotiations that dragged on even as evidence of the dangers of runaway greenhouse-gas pollution mounted ... The breakthrough tethers non-binding national pledges to limit carbon-dioxide emissions with more formal agreements that enable monitoring and verification of countries’ actions to ensure trust. Nations will also submit new plans every five years, a key provision that acknowledges that existing national pledges are nowhere near tough enough to prevent highly dangerous levels of global warming. The accord sets a goal of a global peak in greenhouse-gas emissions ‘as soon as possible’ and holding the rise in global temperatures to ‘well below’ 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times, a benchmark for avoiding many of most dangerous consequences of climate change.” Responding to the agreement, Sec. Clinton said, “I applaud President Obama, Secretary Kerry and our negotiating team for helping deliver a new, ambitious international climate agreement in Paris. This is an historic step forward in meeting one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century—the global crisis of climate change. The Paris agreement is testament to America’s ability to lead the world in building a clean energy future where no one is left out or left behind. And it was made possible in part by every person, business owner, and community in the United States and around the world that stepped up to prove we don’t have to choose between growing our economy and protecting our kids’ health and future—we can do both.” [National Journal, [12/12/15](#); Hillary Clinton Press Release, [12/12/15](#)]

### GOV. MARTIN O’MALLEY

**Gov. O’Malley: Paris Climate Accord “Sets Ambitious Goals To Fight Climate Change. As POTUS, I Will Hold The World To Them.”** On December 12, 2015, “nearly 200 countries cemented a major international accord to fight global warming ... capping years of fractious negotiations that dragged on even as evidence of the dangers of runaway greenhouse-gas pollution mounted ... The breakthrough tethers non-binding national pledges to limit carbon-dioxide emissions with more formal agreements that enable monitoring and verification of countries’ actions to ensure trust. Nations will also submit new plans every five years, a key provision that acknowledges that existing national pledges are nowhere near tough enough to prevent highly dangerous levels of global warming. The accord sets a goal of a global peak in greenhouse-gas emissions ‘as soon as possible’ and holding the rise in global temperatures to ‘well below’ 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times, a benchmark for avoiding many of most dangerous consequences of climate change.” Responding to the agreement, Gov. O’Malley tweeted, “Congrats #COP21 on the #ParisAgreement. The pact sets ambitious goals to fight climate change. As POTUS, I will hold the world to them.” [National Journal, [12/12/15](#); @MartinOMalley Twitter, [12/12/15](#)]

## **SEN. BERNIE SANDERS**

**Sen. Sanders: Paris Climate Agreement Was A “Step Forward” But It “Goes Nowhere Near Far Enough.”** On December 12, 2015, “nearly 200 countries cemented a major international accord to fight global warming ... capping years of fractious negotiations that dragged on even as evidence of the dangers of runaway greenhouse-gas pollution mounted ... The breakthrough tethers non-binding national pledges to limit carbon-dioxide emissions with more formal agreements that enable monitoring and verification of countries’ actions to ensure trust. Nations will also submit new plans every five years, a key provision that acknowledges that existing national pledges are nowhere near tough enough to prevent highly dangerous levels of global warming. The accord sets a goal of a global peak in greenhouse-gas emissions ‘as soon as possible’ and holding the rise in global temperatures to ‘well below’ 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times, a benchmark for avoiding many of most dangerous consequences of climate change.” Responding to the agreement, Sen. Sanders said, “While this is a step forward it goes nowhere near far enough. The planet is in crisis. We need bold action in the very near future and this does not provide that.” [[National Journal](#), [12/12/15](#); Sen. Sanders Press Release, [12/12/15](#)]