The Impacts of Climate Change and the Trump Administration’s Anti-Environmental Agenda in Michigan
April 22, 2020

Just in the past three years, the Trump administration has attempted to roll back at least 95 environmental rules and regulations to the detriment of the environment and Americans’ public health. Moreover, the administration refuses to act to mitigate the effects of climate change—instead loosening requirements for polluters emitting the greenhouse gases that fuel the climate crisis. This dangerous agenda is affecting the lives of Americans across all 50 states.

Between 2017 and 2019, Michigan experienced one flood and four severe storms. The damages of each event led to losses of at least $1 billion.

Impacts of climate change

Extreme weather
• In 2014, Michigan experienced record rainfall, exceeding 6 inches in some areas of the state. The rain led to significant flooding, damaging homes, businesses, and other infrastructure, and caused two deaths.
• The severity of summer droughts in Michigan is expected to triple by 2050.
• Nearly 340,000 people in Michigan live in areas that are at an elevated risk of inland flooding.

Temperature
• Michigan currently rarely experiences days of dangerous heat per year but is projected to see 15 such days per year by 2050. This endangers the lives of the more than 270,000 Michigan residents who are especially vulnerable to extreme heat.
Impacts of the Trump administration’s anti-environmental policies

Climate
• In March 2020, the Trump administration announced its final rule to overturn Obama-era fuel efficiency standards for cars. These weakened fuel standards will lead to higher greenhouse gas and particulate matter emissions and will cost Michiganders more than $745 million annually.
• The Trump administration is attempting to gut climate considerations from major infrastructure projects by eliminating the “cumulative impact” requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act. This is concerning because Michigan’s economy relies heavily on its food and agriculture industry and its outdoor recreation industry—both of which are highly dependent on climate and weather conditions.
  • **Agriculture:** Michigan’s food and agriculture industry employs 850,000 Michiganders, making up roughly 17 percent of the state’s jobs. Additionally, the industry contributes $104.7 billion annually to the state’s economy.
  • **Outdoor recreation:** The outdoor recreation industry in Michigan generates 232,000 direct jobs and more than $26 billion in consumer spending.

Air quality
• Mercury emissions in Michigan decreased by more than 90 percent from 2011 to 2017, yet the Trump administration just undermined limits on the amount of mercury and other toxic emissions that are allowed from power plants.