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As an outdoor enthusiast, Congressman Akin believes in the importance of conservation and the wise use of the nation's natural resources. As an engineer by training, he has worked hard to ensure that federal legislation benefits, rather than harms, the environment.

By any objective standard, the environment is cleaner and healthier today than at anytime in recent history. Much of the progress the country has made in maintaining and improving our environment is directly attributable to an increased standard of living. Increased prosperity, fueled in large part by the relatively low tax and regulatory environment of the United States, has enabled us to balance environmental protection with personal empowerment – allowing more people to enjoy the beauty of a diverse land.

For example, the bald eagle (still protected as a national symbol) was recently removed from the endangered species list. In 1967, there were only 417 pairs of eagles. Today, nearly 10,000 pairs have been documented.

In the last thirty years, this nation has also dramatically reduced the amount of major air pollutants. This success is due in large part to federal initiatives like the *Clean Air Act* and state and local programs that incentivize environmentally responsible behavior.

In effect, by promoting policies that increase prosperity, we free up more resources that can be directed to maintaining a healthy environment.

Global Warming

Climate change is a hot topic in the scientific and political communities and increasingly important to the American people. As a member of the House Science and Technology Committee, Congressman Akin has participated in hearings on global warming, including its

causes and possible effects.

While the political climate change debate continues, research into the effects of human caused CO₂ is ongoing. Although some of the physics and meteorology surrounding climate is well understood, the question of predicting future climate trends as well as man's ability to definitively influence them is still an active field of scientific research. Moreover, despite our desire for complete certainty, we must understand that global climate is very complex phenomena. No one variable can be taken as the sole driver of climate and there exist cycles within cycles of meteorological variability. Scientists state that the planet has gone through many natural heating and cooling cycles over the last thousand years.

While scientists understand that increased levels of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases work to trap heat, those gases are not the only variables when it comes to Earth's temperature trends. For example, the sun itself has variable output, which affects temperature cycles. Currently, scientists are somewhat puzzled by a current-extended minimum in solar activity. Such a long-term lack of solar output in the early 18th century, referred to as the Maunder Minimum, is thought to have contributed to the last mini-ice age. Of course, factors such as solar variability - that could cause a mini-ice age - would probably not afford a man-made solution.

Although there is much more for us to learn, the Congressman believes we can take common-sense steps to reduce CO₂ emissions, without harming economic stability. That is why he supports research into carbon neutral technologies. However, even with alternative energy options, it is impossible for the United States to significantly reduce global CO₂ emissions without a shared commitment from other developed and developing nations, such as China and India.

Ultimately, Congressman Akin is committed to a common-sense approach to global warming concerns through balancing economic and environmental outcomes. For that reason, he will not support policies that hamstring America's economy without producing any meaningful reduction in global warming projections (the Environmental Protection Agencies own studies show an insubstantial reduction in global temperatures as a likely result of Cap and Trade policies).

Clean Energy

As an engineer, the Congressman believes the country can cultivate domestic energy sources while fulfilling its responsibility to conserve and steward the resources we have been given. As the United States considers how to best use and protect the environment minimizing negative

impacts and protecting native species and their habitats should always be a priority.

Safe, technologically advanced and emissions free nuclear power is currently the best option for meeting energy needs without harming the environment. In fact, the easiest way to reduce CO2 emissions would be to double emissions-free U.S. nuclear power production, replacing fossil fuel based power production. This would have the same effect as removing nearly every passenger car from U.S. roadways.

New technologies hold much promise for America's energy future. Congressman Akin is particularly interested in the development of new battery technology, including hydrogen fuel cells to power vehicles and homes safely - without harmful emissions. While research continues into the most effective application, green battery technology is an investment Congressman Akin supports.

Fascinating scientific advances have brought the nation to the brink of a green energy future. Yet, these technologies remain financially out-of-reach for most individuals and businesses. Today, Americans must find ways to make existing, environmentally-friendly technology more accessible for consumers. Congressman Akin believes that this will happen not through economically repressive federal mandates but by empowering and incentivizing private-sector innovation and investment.

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