

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051  
MINORITY (202) 225-5074  
<http://oversight.house.gov>

### MEMORANDUM

April 4, 2019

**To: Members of the Committee on Oversight and Reform**

**Fr: Majority Staff**

**Re: Hearing on “The Need for Leadership to Combat Climate Change and Protect National Security”**

On **Tuesday, April 9, 2019, at 10:00 a.m., in room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building**, the Committee will hold a hearing on the need for leadership to combat climate change and protect national security.

#### I. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF HEARING

Climate change presents a massive and growing threat to the United States, including to our national security.

In November 2018, the U.S. Global Change Research Program released Volume II of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, which concluded that climate change “is projected to significantly affect human health, the economy, and the environment in the United States.” The report also found that efforts to mitigate the causes of climate change and adapt to its impacts do not “currently approach the scales needed to avoid substantial damages to the U.S. economy, environment, and human health and well-being over the coming decades.”<sup>1</sup>

In January 2019, the Director of National Intelligence, Daniel R. Coats, released the Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community. The report found: “Global environmental and ecological degradation, as well as climate change, are likely to fuel competition for resources, economic distress, and social discontent through 2019 and beyond.”<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Global Change Research Program, *Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II* (Nov. 23, 2018) (online at <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov>).

<sup>2</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community* (Jan. 29, 2019) (online at [www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/2019-ATA-SFR---SSCI.pdf](http://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/2019-ATA-SFR---SSCI.pdf)).

Last month, Former Secretary of State John Kerry and former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel led 58 prominent national security officials in sending a letter to President Trump, writing:

[W]e are deeply concerned by reports that National Security Council officials are considering forming a committee to dispute and undermine military and intelligence judgments on the threat posed by climate change. ... We urge you to trust and heed the analysis of your own national security agencies and the science agencies on which their assessments depend, including the 21 senior defense officials that have identified climate change as a security threat during your Administration. A committee designed to undermine the many years of work they have done will weaken our ability to respond to real threats, putting American lives at risk.<sup>3</sup>

The hearing will examine the threat of climate change to the United States, including national security, and the need for leadership to combat this threat.

## **II. WITNESSES**

### **The Honorable John F. Kerry**

Former Secretary of State  
Former United States Senator

### **The Honorable Charles T. Hagel**

Former Secretary of Defense  
Former United States Senator

Staff contacts: Amish Shah, Matthew Patane, and Russell Anello at (202) 225-5051.

---

<sup>3</sup> Letter from John F. Kerry and Chuck Hagel et al., to President Donald J. Trump (Mar. 5, 2019) (online at [https://climateandsecurity.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/letter-to-the-president\\_senior-military-and-national-security-leaders-denounce-nsc-climate-panel\\_2019\\_3\\_05-1.pdf](https://climateandsecurity.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/letter-to-the-president_senior-military-and-national-security-leaders-denounce-nsc-climate-panel_2019_3_05-1.pdf)).