

Montana Coal Council, Helena Montana July 17, 2018

Introduction:

It is a real pleasure to be here today to talk to members of the Montana Coal Council.

As you know, coal provides about 30% of world energy, produces about 30% of the electricity in the United States, and is likely to be available in the future under current production three times longer than either natural gas or oil. Here in the United States, we possess more than 25% of global proven coal reserves and most of these reserves are in the Wyoming-Montana region.

Coal in the United States plays the dominant role in our long-term energy independence.

Yet coal production is under unprecedented attack from newly abundant natural gas, but more importantly as the major producer of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases blamed for global warming.

Today, I have some really good news. I can now show clearly that it is physically impossible for greenhouse gases to cause observed global warming. Greenhouse gases simply do not absorb enough heat.

Heat is what a body of matter must absorb to get warmer and emit to get cooler.

The fundamental problem is in our understanding heat first described by Joseph Fourier in 1822.

What I am about to describe is not some theory. It is based on direct, unequivocal observation of what heat is and how heat flows.

Again, Greenhouse gases do not absorb enough heat to cause observed warming. We can burn safely all the coal available without overheating Earth, but we do need to minimize pollution.

If I am correct, and the evidence appears overwhelming, my conclusions constitute a major revolution in science.

Revolutions in science are always slow to catch on. But right now, time is of the essence. Political leaders are now poised to spend a significant portion of global gross domestic product in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to decrease global temperatures.

This will be a total waste of money.

As the Chief of Atmospheric Chemistry at NOAA said to me “Peter, there is no way you could be right and all the rest of us are wrong.”

Well, it turns out there is. The data are remarkably clear. That is what I want to discuss today.