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**FYI: Last Year's Record Damages From \$300 to \$400 Billion**  
Christy Kluesner [ckluesner1@outlook.com]

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 06, 2018 10:34 AM

**To:** Dean Kluesner [deankluesner@outlook.com]; Virginia Brien [vbrien@mindspring.com]; ginny [vbrien@dorrierunderwood.com]; Richard Greene [rgreene66@gmail.com]; dimple.ajmera@charlottenc.gov; Emily Wichman [emilywichman1@gmail.com]; Emily Trentham [eatrenth@ncsu.edu]; Rich Osborne [rjosborne@live.com]; MTB 50 [thomasbmaier@gmail.com]; TIE Bi Junior [tbkamagate@yahoo.fr]; Seth Reno [sethtreno@gmail.com]; John [jfbrien@mindspring.com]; Jim Williams [JWilliam@littleonline.com]; Steve Johnston; Allen Hubbard [roseandal2@gmail.com]; Ryan McGill [ryan@voteryanmcgill.com]; leigh coulter [3kidpainter@gmail.com]; Cking724@yahoo.com; Norman Spencer [norman.spencer@sustaincharlotte.org]; Lawrence Toppman [ltoppman@carolina.rr.com]

Spotlight on CCL Volunteers' Op-Ed of the Week: Congratulations to Roger Patocka, Jane Shuttleworth and Penny Nordstrom of the CCL Iowa Great Lakes Chapter for their op-ed published in the Dickinson County News: State of our union is related to state of our climate President Trump opened his State of the Union Address acknowledging the heroic efforts of the first responders that came to the aid of victims in the floods that devastated Houston and the wildfires that engulfed California. However, he did not mention what loaded the dice making those disasters so dangerous and costly: climate change. Last year produced record-shattering damages between \$300 to \$400 billion dollars. It is unusual to have this many billion-plus events in a single year, and even more unusual is the cumulative costs of these events: \$306.2 billion in 2017, breaking the previous U.S. annual record of \$214.8 billion (CPI adjusted) in 2005 from the impacts of hurricanes Dennis, Katrina, Rita and Wilma.

In addition to the hurricanes and fires, four of 2017's billion-plus damage occurred in the Midwest. These severe weather events are fueled by rising global temperatures. Both the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration and the National Aeronautics and Space administration confirmed that 2017 was the hottest year on record without an El Niño. As global warming continues, we can expect such natural disasters to be more intense and more frequent, potentially outpacing our ability to respond and adapt.

Responding to military threats is clearly a concern of President Trump. According to his military leaders, climate change is a clear and present danger to national security. In 2017, Trump's Secretary of Defense James Mattis told the U.S. Senate, "Climate change is impacting stability in areas of the world where our troops are operating today." In the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, the military warned that climate change is a "threat multiplier," aggravating poverty, political instability and social tensions. While the Executive Branch appears silent, lawmakers see this issue with clearer eyes. Last December, 106 members of congress sent President Trump a letter asking him to include climate change in America's National Security Strategy. "It is imperative that the United States addresses this growing geopolitical threat," the bipartisan letter stated.

[And the bipartisan drumbeat for climate action grows with each passing month. The bipartisan House Climate Solutions Caucus is one of the most encouraging developments in Washington. Formed in 2016 by Republican Carlos Curbelo and Democrat Ted Deutch – two Florida congressmen whose districts are at great risk from climate change — its aim was to depoliticize the climate issue by bringing together members from both sides of the aisle to engage in constructive dialogue.](#) Membership is kept even between Republicans and Democrats. Participation doubled in 2017 and now stands at 70 members. As Dr. Catherine Hayhoe, climate scientist and evangelical Christian, states, "Far more connects than divides us when it comes to climate." Even though less than 50 percent of people believe humans are the main reason the climate is changing, the vast majority of the country — over 70 percent — say 'yes' when asked whether CO2 should be


regulated as a pollutant. "Why do they say yes if they don't think it's causing climate change?" Dr. Hayhoe, asked. "Doesn't matter! What matters are solutions." And solutions with bipartisan support.

A solution that is finding growing support from conservatives and liberals alike is the Carbon Fee and Dividend. This policy puts a fee on carbon at the source of extraction, making clean energy cheaper and more attractive than dirty, polluting energy. The money raised would be returned to Americans in the form of a monthly rebate. In 20 years, the Carbon Fee and Dividend would reduce our CO2 emissions 50 percent below 1990 levels. Plus, it would create jobs and put money into the pockets of hard working Americans so people can adapt and prosper.

Although not mentioned in the President's address, it is obvious that the state of our union is closely linked to the state of our climate, and it's encouraging to see that Republicans and Democrats in Congress understand the risks we face from a failure to act. When Congress introduces and passes bipartisan climate legislation, the state of our union will be stronger. As former northwest Iowa Congressman Berkley Bedell wrote in 2017, "I cry for all those who suffered from the visits of Irma, Harvey and Maria, but I cry even more for my grandchild who will inherit a world too hot to support human life, unless we in America decide to work together." We have done it before, and we can do it again.

Sent by the Citizens' Climate Lobby's Charlotte Chapter



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