



MICHIGAN REPORT

GROUP CHARGES CLIMATE PANEL RIGGED

Michigan, and other states, have hired the Center for Climate Strategies to assist state climate councils in determining how best the state can respond to global warming issues. But what they are getting is a pre-packaged set of recommendations that have no proof of effectiveness, Paul Chesser of Climate Strategies Watch told those gathered Tuesday for a luncheon hosted by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy.

State officials said the Michigan council is developing its own plan based on Michigan findings and needs, not being served a pre-determined set of recommendations.

Mr. Chesser, a proclaimed global warming skeptic, said the CCS was supported largely by foundations and other donors espousing that global warming is largely a function of human activity and is pushing policy recommendations developed by or at least promoted by those groups.

“An express advocacy group has not business being involved intimately in developing policy,” Mr. Chesser said.

Mr. Chesser argued the state climate councils, such as the Michigan Climate Action Council, should be open to discussions of the science supporting global warming findings as well as policies to address it. But he said CCS-run councils do not allow such discussions.

DEQ spokesperson Robert McCann admitted the Climate Action Council was not discussing the reality or causes of global warming. “They’re starting point is what science is telling us,” he said. “There’s really is no scientific debate at this point.”

But Mr. McCann said the council is not being led to pre-determined recommendations that CCS may have offered in other states. “That’s certainly not how it’s working here,” he said. “They are really taking an open book look at what’s happening here.”

Mr. Chesser also said the savings and economic improvements cited by CCS from the plans it has developed in other states do not come with sufficient information to prove the validity of the claims.

He urged Michigan legislators and others to at least slow the movement of any recommendations from the Climate Action Council to give them further scrutiny.

Mr. McCann argued the recommendations expected from the Climate Action Council will not only help to improve the state’s environment, but will also help to improve its economy by creating incentives for alternative energy and energy efficiency. “They’ll help us protect the environment and carve a path to those next alternative energy jobs,” he said.