

From: **James E. Enstrom** <jenstrom@ucla.edu>

Date: Fri, Nov 15, 2024 at 9:30 AM

Subject: Defamation Complaint Against Alexander Gershunov, PhD

To: Margaret Leinen <mleinen@ucsd.edu>

Cc: Andreas Andersson <aandersson@ucsd.edu>, Simone Baumann-Pickering <sbaumann@ucsd.edu>, Paolo Cessi <pcessi@ucsd.edu>, Amato Evan <aevan@ucsd.edu>, Octavio Aburto Oropeza <maburto@ucsd.edu>, Veerabhadran Ramanathan <vramanathan@ucsd.edu>, Richard Somerville <rsomerville@ucsd.edu>

November 15, 2024

Margaret Leinen, PhD
Director, Scripps Institution of Oceanography
University of California, San Diego
<https://mleinen.scrippsprofiles.ucsd.edu/mleinen@ucsd.edu>
(858) 534-2827

Re: Defamation Complaint Against Alexander Gershunov, PhD

Dear Director Leinen,

This is a formal defamation complaint against UCSD Scripps Institution of Oceanography Research Meteorologist Alexander Gershunov, PhD (Gershunov) (<https://scripps.ucsd.edu/profiles/agershunov>). This matter involves the November 9, 2024 “A Climate Conversation” Forum held in Ojai, CA (see flyer below).

The Forum featured Princeton Physics Professor Emeritus and CO2 Coalition Co-Founder William Happer (Happer) (<https://co2coalition.org/teammember/william-happer/>). Happer is a renowned physicist who has published on the benefits of CO2 since the 1980s, in addition to his very important physics research. He is a NAS Member and Fellow of APS and AAAS. Also featured was CO2 Coalition Executive Director Gregory Wrightstone (Wrightstone) (<https://co2coalition.org/teammember/gregory-wrightstone-executive-director/>). Wrightstone is an accomplished geologist and best-selling author who has criticized climate alarmism. In addition, I provided information about the adverse impact of climate-related regulations on Californians, such as, the article “Climate Reactionaries: Green activists defend policies that disproportionately harm the poor” (<https://www.city-journal.org/article/climate-reactionaries>).

In order to provide diverse points of view, the Forum organizers invited about 30 Southern California climate experts (primarily UCLA, UCSB, and UCSD professors) to provide the “97% consensus” evidence on climate science. Only Gershunov accepted the invitation and on October 6 he stated “Thank you for your invitation. I am willing and able to contribute to the symposium.” However, on October 31 Gershunov declined to attend and instead prepared the attached defamatory statement “From climate scientist invited to speak.” The statement was distributed on November 9 to Forum attendees, including myself. The statement claims that Happer and Wrightstone are “two oil industry hacks” and that “denial of established scientific results and replacing them with lies and confusion is the true agenda.” The statement contains many other false and unprofessional claims. Gershunov provided no evidence to support his claims.

I request that you review Gershunov's statement and then speak with me about the need for accurate and objective assessment of evidence relevant to climate science and climate-related regulations. This request is particularly relevant to California, as explained, in the "Climate Reactionaries" article. I have copied this message to the seven other Scripps experts who were invited to speak at the Forum.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

James E. Enstrom, PhD, MPH
Retired UCLA Research Professor (Epidemiology)
CO2 Coalition Team Member
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cc:

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Veerabhadran Ramanathan <vramanathan@ucsd.edu>
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A CLIMATE CONVERSATION

Join us for a panel discussion, short film,
and Q&A with nationally renowned climate scientists.



November 9, 2024

Matilija Auditorium
703 El Paseo Rd., Ojai, CA

For further information text
(310) 985-3475

Event from 4:00 - 7:00 pm
Doors Open at 3:30 pm

Suggested Donation \$5

Presented by: Greater Goods and the Common Sense Coalition

“A Climate Conversation”



WILLIAM HAPPER
Co-Founder and Chair of the CO2 Coalition

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CO₂ COALITION



The *Heartland*
INSTITUTE
Ideas that empower people

+



Gregory Whitestone
Executive Director of the CO2 Coalition

← \$



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From climate scientist invited to speak:

I corresponded with Tracey Hess, who invited me. I had some questions, expressed my concerns about this event being clearly biased against science and facts, and though I initially did consider coming, I never agreed or committed to it.

After doing some homework on the two oil industry hacks invited to represent the so-called "other side", I realized that clarity was not on the agenda of this conversation. Rather, denial of established scientific results and replacing them with lies and confusion is the true agenda. The two characters representing "the other side" of this fossilized "discussion" have no connection to climate science by either training or scientific (peer-reviewed) publication. Their only connection to climate science is via being paid to be clever and persistent in denying it.

Climate science is clear about the reality and anthropogenic causes of global warming. Consensus on this issue among climate scientists is at least 98%. Setting up a "balanced discussion" of climate change between two oil industry hacks and one climate scientist is ludicrous. It's like setting up a "balanced discussion" of evolution between two evangelical ministers and one evolutionary scientist. This format is not designed to shed clarity on the facts and is a clear disservice to the public.

So, realizing that despite my best intentions I would be at best wasting my time trying to provide factual information against an onslaught of well-practiced lies, I informed Tracey the organizer that I am not coming. I informed her of my decision on October 31 — hardly last minute.

To reiterate, the planning and format of this "climate conversation" is heavily biased from the start and it will only lead to confusion about climate change on the part of the attending public whether or not actual climate scientists participate. This is my professional opinion. I indicated that much to the organizers.

This is what I wrote to the organizers explaining my decision not to participate: "The topic is not complicated. It only seems complicated because of the efforts to confuse and complicate it by folks like the other participants you have invited. It makes no sense for me trying to explain the facts in a conversation with folks whose job it is to deny and confuse the facts."

Happy to discuss any of this further. It is interesting, for example, that the first climate model was developed at Princeton (where one of the attending climate change deniers is emeritus professor) and it predicted the anthropogenic fingerprint of global warming in the 1970s, before it was observed.

Alexander Gershunov
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