

“U.S. Withdrawal from Paris Climate Accord”

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***Abstract:** Environmental policy is a relatively new phenomenon in human history that is becoming increasingly debated on an international scale. The U.S. is a major player in foreign policy decisions that can drive the global narrative. For the past few decades, there have been several attempts to address climate change, however, most have resulted in minimal success. This paper addresses the role that American presidents and their politics have had in the success and failure of global environmental agreements, with a focus on the Paris Climate Accord. The paper analyzes the underlying processes that explain why President Trump withdrew the United States from the Paris Climate Accord. Ultimately, Republican orthodoxy clashes with international climate change policy, and the current political dynamics of the U.S. encourage President Trump to act on the interests of his party’s supporters.*

I. Introduction

The Paris Climate Accord was initially signed on December 12, 2015 by 195 countries with the intention of reducing carbon dioxide emissions below pre-industrial levels to combat climate change. The United States, under the leadership of then-President Obama, joined the Paris Climate Accord at its inception on Earth Day, 2016.¹ After a tumultuous election, President Trump emerged victorious and early on in his presidency he began rolling back environmental protections. On June 1, 2017, President Trump officially announced that the United States would be withdrawing its participation in the Paris Climate Accord. This decision received mixed reactions from the American public as conservatives praised the decision while liberals grew frustrated.² As the rest of the world takes steps towards environmental regulation to address climate change, the U.S. has continuously lagged behind.

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Why is it that the U.S. tends to slow the process down or weaken agreements to reduce American accountability? The Paris Climate Accord serves as an ideal example to analyze

¹ "Historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change: 195 Nations Set Path to Keep Temperature Rise Well Below 2 Degrees Celsius," UNFCCC. Last modified 13 December 2015. <https://unfccc.int/news/finale-cop21>

² Dong, L. “The Trump Administration’s Decision to Withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Accord.” *Chinese Journal of Population Resources and Environment* 15 (3): 183. (2018). doi:10.1080/10042857.2017.1343903.

how partisan politics and foreign policy views guide American presidents' handling of international environmental agreements. The decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord can be explained by analyzing the ideology of the Republican Party towards environmentalism and foreign policy as well as increased trends of partisanship within American politics.

President Trump's decision to take the U.S. out of the Paris Climate Accord isn't the first time the United States has opted not to follow global trends on environmental policy. International climate agreements are fairly new in human history as society becomes more accepting of climate change science. In 1988, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was created as the first international body focused on addressing environmental issues on a global scale. The IPCC would become instrumental in laying the groundwork for international climate policy by establishing baseline scientific facts.³ In 1992, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) became the first international treaty to create non-binding goals to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions by countries.⁴ Following the creation of the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol of 1997 became the first official international treaty to focus on the reduction of greenhouse gases using a number of varying methods, including market-based mechanisms pushed by the United States, despite the U.S. Senate never formally ratifying the Kyoto Protocol out of concerns of weakening American sovereignty.⁵ The Kyoto Protocol was a major step forward in international cooperation, even without American participation.

A decade later, the international community recognized the Kyoto Protocol was no longer meeting its original goals. At the Conference of Parties (COP) 15 in Copenhagen, states created additional goals to reduce the effects of climate change.⁶ Ultimately, what would become known as the Copenhagen Accords, weren't formally agreed to by the COP due to objections by major parties, such as the U.S. The agreement made major strides towards addressing climate change by formalizing a goal to limit global temperature rise to a maximum of two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels; adopting a universal method of reporting and verification; and setting aside \$100 billion a year for green development in emerging countries.⁷ The framework established by the Copenhagen Accords would be instrumental in laying the groundwork for future agreements.

In December 2015, over 195 countries signed the Paris Climate Accord. The agreement put forth more ambitious goals to cap temperature rise below two degrees Celsius, with the hope of keeping temperatures below a 1.5 degree increase above pre-industrial levels.⁸ The Paris Climate Accord increased transparency among nations by requiring regular reporting of emissions and their efforts to curb those emissions. In addition, the agreement also created requirements from developed countries to provide financial aid to developing

³ Golinski, Jan. "UNFCCC Timeline." United Nations. Last modified March 19, 2014. <http://unfccc.int/timeline/>.

⁴ Golinski. "UNFCCC Timeline"

⁵ "A Brief History of the United States and the UN Climate Change Negotiations." The World at 1 Degree Celsius. June 02, 2017. <https://worldat1c.org/a-brief-history-of-the-united-states-and-the-un-climate-change-negotiations-bf7525d4ef13>.

⁶ Golinski. "UNFCCC Timeline"

⁷ "History of UN Climate Talks." Center for Climate and Energy Solutions. October 25, 2017. <https://www.c2es.org/content/history-of-un-climate-talks/>.

⁸ "Historic Paris Agreement..." UNFCCC

countries through the Green Climate Fund, thus encouraging them to develop renewable sources of energy.⁹

II. U.S. Participation

The United States has an inconsistent history when it comes to engaging in international agreements to address climate change. The Kyoto Protocol had a major provision shaped by the United States in allowing market mechanisms to be considered a tool for dealing with climate change.¹⁰ Although the U.S. would play a major role in shaping the language of the Kyoto Protocol, it never formally joined. President Clinton signed the protocol, but never submitted it to the U.S. Senate to be ratified, knowing it would fail. When President Bush took office, he announced the U.S. would not pursue ratification of the protocol and withdrew the U.S.'s signature.¹¹

President Obama announced the Copenhagen Accord in 2010. The U.S. dictated the negotiations to ensure it was non-binding and included weak regulations. The Accord was also negotiated outside of the formal U.N. procedures and received criticism for both the process and the weak nature of the Accord. The lack of transparency in the process as well as the non-binding goals left many environmentalists feeling like the Copenhagen Accord was a setback rather than a step forward.¹²

The Paris Climate Accord of 2015 offered an opportunity for states to come together and set a bold new agenda towards combatting climate change. The U.S. focused its efforts during the negotiations on mitigation, transparency and creating a non-binding agreement that weakened expectations. The U.S. was successful in creating “nationally determined” contributions for determining greenhouse gas reduction levels.¹³ Although the Accord was weakened by the U.S. to reduce the ability for it to be enforced, it did mark a significant step towards combatting global climate change. President Obama did sign the U.S. onto the Paris Climate Accord in 2015 along with dozens of other countries, which has since grown to include over 195 countries.¹⁴ Similar to the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Climate Accord was never ratified by the U.S. Senate and within months of taking office, President Trump announced the U.S. would withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord.¹⁵ President Trump spent much of his time on the campaign trail arguing against international agreements, claiming they were fundamentally unfair to the United States. President Trump's decision to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris Climate Accord was consistent with his own views of foreign policy.

III. President Trump's Foreign Policy

⁹ “Historic Paris Agreement...” UNFCCC

¹⁰ “History of UN Climate Talks.” Center for Climate and Energy Solutions.

¹¹ “History of UN Climate Talks.” Center for Climate and Energy Solutions.

¹² “A Brief History...” The World at 1 Degree Celsius

¹³ Cléménçon, Raymond. 2016. “The Two Sides of the Paris Climate Accord.” *Journal of Environment & Development* 25 (1): 3–24. doi:10.1177/1070496516631362.

¹⁴ “Historic Paris Agreement...” UNFCCC

¹⁵ Han, Victoria. 2017. “Trump's Promise: Withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord.” *Environmental Claims Journal* 29 (4): 337. <http://proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/login?ins=tu&url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edb&AN=126638010&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

President Trump has drawn both criticism and praise for his foreign policy vision, most notably referred to as “America First.” Throughout the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald Trump criticized the neoliberal world order created by over 75 years of U.S. foreign policy decisions.¹⁶ Key aspects of U.S. involvement were now being questioned. For example, America’s commitment to NATO and the contributions of other NATO nations were now up for debate. President Trump has also brought international trade agreements to the forefront of American discourse so that they may be discussed and analyzed to determine how the U.S. is being strengthened or weakened as a result.¹⁷

As a businessman, Trump has spent his entire life focused on profits and beating his economic rivals. His experience in New York real estate crafted a worldview where there are only winners and losers. As a result, President Trump has widely been considered a realist because of his zero-sum approach to foreign policy. The zero-sum approach President Trump uses can be seen in his decision to exit the Paris Climate Accord. Trump perceives the U.S. as not benefitting from the deal and that the regulations within the deal would harm our economy, allowing other countries to make gains on the United States. If anyone other than the U.S. is benefitting, then America is falling behind.¹⁸

In addition to his zero-sum approach to foreign policy, President Trump is a known skeptic of climate change; he has tweeted on multiple occasions that climate change is a hoax. On the campaign trail, Trump argued he would support the revival of the coal industry, blaming its decline on oppressive environmental regulations. He also spent a great deal of time campaigning against government overregulation that was restricting the growth and competitiveness of American business. President Trump is the embodiment of the Republican Party when it comes to issues of climate change. His ideology, and that of the Republican Party, is predisposed to oppose climate change policies, especially ones which are determined by other countries.¹⁹

The Paris Climate Accord was also perceived by President Trump as fundamentally unfair to the United States and would constrain the economic potential of the U.S. Regulations to reduce national greenhouse gases would require businesses to make drastic changes, potentially affecting their economic output.²⁰ Given that the U.S. is the world’s largest economy and second largest polluter, major changes would be needed to reduce national greenhouse gas emissions. Because the U.S. would be economically disadvantaged, President Trump viewed the Paris Climate Accord as a net loss. He believed his actions would protect American workers and businesses from being disproportionately regulated when compared to their international counterparts.

Another challenge to creating successful environmental policy lies in how the effects are realized. Most policies allow voters to see the direct consequence of the action, whether its providing healthcare to children, building a bridge, or purchasing military equipment.

¹⁶ Clarke, Michael, and Anthony Ricketts. 2017. “Donald Trump and American Foreign Policy: The Return of the Jacksonian Tradition.” *Comparative Strategy* 36 (4): 366. <http://proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/login?ins=tu&url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edb&AN=125979170&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

¹⁷ Macdonald, Paul K. 2018. “America First? Explaining Continuity and Change in Trump's Foreign Policy.” *Political Science Quarterly*. 133 (3): 401-434.

¹⁸ Macdonald. “America First?” 401-434.

¹⁹ Bomberg, Elizabeth. 2017. “Environmental Politics in the Trump Era: An Early Assessment.” *Environmental Politics* 26 (5): 956–63. doi:10.1080/09644016.2017.1332543.

²⁰ “Bomberg. “Environmental Politics...” 956-963.

Voters and politicians are able to see the tangible success of their action shortly after it is enacted. With environmental policy, the effects are often far less visible and establishing a definitive, causal relationship is difficult. Environmental policies are aimed at addressing futuristic problems before they become irreversible. Politicians and voters struggle with the value of the future over the present. Conservative values are incompatible with policies that require individual sacrifice in exchange for intangible benefits.

Although President Trump has made headlines with his “America First” foreign policy, it begs the question as to how much his policies really differ from the Republican Party? Environmentalism is not a cornerstone issue of the modern day Republican Party. Despite having launched many conservation efforts just over a century ago under one of the party’s early leaders, Theodore Roosevelt, the Republican Party of today has entrenched itself in opposition to most environmental institutions.²¹

Trump has fit right into the Republican Party with his environmental views and his businesslike mentality has exemplified their understanding of environmental policy. Environmental issues have primarily been framed in an economic lens where environmental policy is only to be pursued if it provides economic gains. When efforts to curb climate change negatively affect businesses, environmental issues are cast aside.²² The science of climate change has also been cast in doubt by the Republican Party. A clear majority of scientists, 97%, state that climate change is real and caused by humans. On the other side, Republicans either argue that climate change is not real or that it may be real, but it is not caused by humans.²³

IV. American Polarization

Knowing that President Trump comfortably fits within his own party when it comes to environmental policy, it is important to understand the context of American politics. President Trump exemplifies the increasing partisan divide within American politics as both parties move further towards their ideological poles. Environmental issues have been no exception.²⁴ As previously discussed, Republicans have dug into their economic view of environmental policy by focusing on the immediate costs associated with climate change policies and outright denial of climate science. On the other side of the isle, the Democratic Party has been widely supportive of climate change policies. Democrats tend to support green energy initiatives and increased regulation to reduce environmental impacts.²⁵

The Paris Climate Agreement received mixed reactions among environmentalists. One side felt that any agreement was better than no agreement, while the other side believed that the Paris Agreement moved the discussion backwards. Supporters applaud the United States’ ability to get almost every country in the world to agree to the same goals and methods of execution. They also note how President Obama was constrained by domestic

²¹ Turner, James Morton. 2009. “‘The Specter of Environmentalism’: Wilderness, Environmental Politics, and the Evolution of the New Right.” *Journal of American History* 96 (1): 123–48. <http://proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/login?ins=tu&url=http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ejh&AN=42838245&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

²² Shear, Michael. "Trump Will Withdraw U.S. From Paris Climate Accord." *The New York Times*. June 01, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/01/climate/trump-paris-climate-agreement.html>

²³ Bomberg. “Environmental Politics...” 956-963

²⁴ Bomberg. “Environmental Politics...” 956-963

²⁵ Bomberg. “Environmental Politics...” 956-963

politics, forcing him to craft a deal he could agree to that did not require consent from the Republican-controlled Senate that considered it dead on arrival.²⁶ Others have critiqued President Obama for hurting environmental cooperation internationally. The Paris Agreement primarily functions on a voluntary participation and places the burden on developing countries rather than the largest polluters.²⁷

One key explanation for why President Trump chose to withdraw the U.S. lies within inter-party dynamics. President Trump made a promise during the presidential campaign that he would leave the Paris Climate Accord if he were elected President.²⁸ Many of his advisors, including EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt and Advisor Stephen Bannon encouraged him to formally leave the Paris Climate Accord. The decision to withdraw was applauded by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.²⁹ Polling also indicates that the decision to withdraw was also supported by two-thirds of Republicans, despite opposition from 60% of the public.³⁰ President Trump withdrew the United States from the Paris Climate Accord to appeal his base rather than the general population. In an era of hyper-partisanship, President Trump is able to move the country in a direction opposed by a clear majority of the population, but can still earn enough support by his own base to avoid any serious political repercussions.

But why do Republicans oppose environmental institutions and climate change policies? In *The Politics of American Foreign Policy*, Gries identifies five moral values of fairness, compassion, loyalty, authority, and purity, all of which shape how Americans view foreign policy. Gries asserts that liberals are more heavily shaped by the principles of fairness and compassion, whereas conservatives are influenced by loyalty, authority, and purity. The values of loyalty, authority, and purity contribute to the more conservative worldview of the Republican Party which distrusts foreign countries and international institutions.³¹ Foreign countries are viewed as a distinct “other” who maintain a lower status than the United States. Other countries are not viewed as “pure” like the United States and any attempt to upset the current world order, with the U.S. at the top, would be antithetical to conservative ideology.³²

Individualism is a cornerstone value of conservatism and it does not just apply to domestic politics. Conservatives also prefer unilateral action as opposed to multilateral action. Gries conducted polling on how the average American feels towards international organizations, controlling for basic demographic variables. The United Nations, the pinnacle example of multilateral diplomacy, averaged 49 degrees of warmth on a feeling thermometer.³³ America as a whole may be split on how they feel about the United Nations, but an ideological breakdown of the results indicated two distinct views. Liberals felt 66

²⁶ Clémenton, Raymond. “The Two Sides...”

²⁷ Clémenton, Raymond. “The Two Sides...”

²⁸ Shear. “Trump Will Withdraw...”

²⁹ Shear. “Trump Will Withdraw...”

³⁰ Clement, Scott, and Brady Dennis. “Post-ABC Poll: Nearly 6 in 10 Oppose Trump Scrapping Paris Agreement.” *The Washington Post*. June 05, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/06/05/post-abc-poll-nearly-6-in-10-oppose-trump-scrapping-paris-agreement/?utm_term=.04aa07534cca.

³¹ Gries, Peter Hayes, *The Politics of American Foreign Policy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), 78-79.

³² Gries. *The Politics of American Foreign Policy*. 78.

³³ Gries. *The Politics of American Foreign Policy*. 103-104

degrees of warmth towards the United Nations, while conservatives averaged only 17 degrees on the feeling thermometer, a significant difference of 49 degrees between the two parties. Similar trends continued across different international organizations, where liberals felt 21 degrees warmer towards the World Bank.³⁴

Conservatives are steadfast in their belief that the United States should not be forced to make decisions based upon other countries and should instead be able to take action on their own. American sovereignty must not be infringed upon by other, lesser nations. The ideology of the Republican Party then comes into conflict with policies to address global climate change as individualism and unilateral action have caused climate change.

V. Environmentalism is reliant on international cooperation

Climate change policies are a classic example of the tragedy of the commons. Each country acts independently based on their own self-interest on a shared set of resources (air, water, land, fuel, etc.), but those decisions, which are rational at the individual level, conversely affect the common good by depleting the resources.³⁵ When it comes to creating effective climate change policies, international cooperation is essential. Climate change has no regard for international political boundaries. Each state must work together to craft a solution and make the appropriate changes.³⁶ There must be one unified definition of the problem, which has primarily centered on greenhouse gas emissions and their effects on global temperature rise. With a globally accepted problem, there must be multilateral action.³⁷ Because there is no overarching global government, it is essential for each state to take actions to meet their greenhouse gas emissions targets. Rational decisions at the state-level are how the world has gotten so close to environmental disaster. True change will require international cooperation to ensure the burden of change is spread proportionally.

If environmental policies require international cooperation, it is clear as to why the Republican Party pushes back. Republicans are much less likely to choose multilateral actions, which are required to effectively address climate change. No single nation can unilaterally address a global issue and without the cooperation of major states, such as the U.S., effectively addressing climate change becomes near impossible.³⁸ President Trump's decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Accord should not come as surprise, as the decision is directly in line with the ideology of the Republican Party, which is skeptical of regulation and international organizations.

VI. International Reaction

³⁴ Gries. *The Politics of American Foreign Policy*. 103-104

³⁵ Sourgens, Frederic Gilles. 2018. "Climate Commons Law: The Transformative Force of the Paris Agreement." *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics* 50 (3): 885–983. doi:<http://nyujilp.org/print-edition/>.

³⁶ Saad, A. 2018. "Pathways of Harm: The Consequences of Trump's Withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord." *Environmental Justice* 11 (1): 47–51. Accessed October 12. doi:10.1089/env.2017.0033.

³⁷ Bomberg, Elizabeth. 2017. "Environmental Politics in the Trump Era: An Early Assessment." *Environmental Politics* 26 (5): 956–63. doi:10.1080/09644016.2017.1332543.

³⁸ Kemp, Luke. 2017. "US-Proofing the Paris Climate Accord." *Climate Policy* 17 (1): 86–101. doi:<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/tpo20>.

Leading up to President Trump's formal announcement to withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord, there were widespread rumors that the decision was looming. At the G7 Summit in May 2017, the U.S. was the only country not to reaffirm its commitment to the Paris Climate Accord and was criticized by the global leadership.³⁹ Once Trump formally announced his plan to withdraw, global condemnations grew as the international community knew that U.S. participation was essential to meeting the two-degree Celsius goal.

World leaders expressed their disappointment in President Trump's decision. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated, "We are deeply disappointed that the United States federal government has decided to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. Canada is unwavering in our commitment to fight climate change and support clean economic growth."⁴⁰ French President Emmanuel Macron took a harsher stance against President Trump when he declared, "I tell you firmly tonight: We will not renegotiate a less ambitious accord. There is no way. Don't be mistaken on climate; there is no plan B because there is no planet B." Macron even went so far as to tweet, "Make Our Planet Great Again," a critique using Trump's own campaign slogan.⁴¹ German Chancellor Angela Merkel was noticeably displeased with the decision. She reaffirmed Germany's commitment to the agreement and stated that, "We know climate change isn't a matter of faith... it's a fact."⁴²

It is important to note that the harshest rebukes of President Trump's decision came from U.S. allies. Some of America's closest allies sharply criticized the American president for deciding to abandon a treaty that has been almost universally agreed upon. Typically, international allies are states that can be relied upon to support one another in times of need. It is unusual for close allies to openly criticize one another.⁴³

American allies weren't the only ones to condemn the U.S. decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord. China, a country which President Trump has criticized for taking advantage of the U.S. economically, has also criticized the U.S. for leaving the Paris Climate Accord. China and the European Union issued a joint statement in support of the Agreement, stating, "The EU and China consider climate action and the clean energy transition an imperative more important than ever. They confirm their commitments under the historic 2015 Paris Agreement and step up their co-operation to enhance its implementation."⁴⁴ Both China, the world's largest polluter, and the EU, the third largest polluter, recognize that they need the U.S. in the Paris Climate Accord for the agreement to be successful. If the U.S. is not an active participant, then the burden to meet the two degree Celsius goal falls even heavier upon their shoulders.

VII. U.S. Response

Although there has been widespread condemnation for American withdrawal, it has fallen largely on deaf ears. As demonstrated earlier, Republicans are more skeptical of other

³⁹ "Trump Climate Deal Pullout: The Global Reaction." BBC News. June 02, 2017. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-40128266>.

⁴⁰ "Trump Climate Deal..." BBC News.

⁴¹ "Trump Climate Deal..." BBC News.

⁴² "Trump Climate Deal..." BBC News.

⁴³ Krzyżanowski, Michał. 2015. "International Leadership Re-/Constructed?" *Journal of Language & Politics* 14 (1): 110–33. doi:10.1075/jlp.14.1.06krz.

⁴⁴ "EU-CHINA LEADERS' STATEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND CLEAN ENERGY" European Union. July 16, 2018 https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/news/20180713_statement_en.pdf

nations. The belief in American exceptionalism also prevents international criticism from driving the conversation among conservatives. The United States is a superior nation and its actions should not be questioned by lesser nations, even its closest allies. International criticism has minimal effects on President Trump and members of the Republican Party.⁴⁵

The U.S. is the world's second largest producer of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases. Without the participation of the United States, the likelihood of meeting international temperature goals becomes even more difficult. Without the U.S., the global community must respond. One option is to completely abandon the project and revert to individual decisions. The international community can also choose to renegotiate the treaty to accommodate American interests or the absence of American participation. Instead, most countries have opted to stay the course, choosing not to renegotiate the agreement but attempt to meet the agreement's goals.⁴⁶

Almost two years since President Trump announced the U.S. withdrawal, no other country has opted to leave. With most countries choosing to stay the course towards meeting the agreement's goals, there has been discussion about how effective the reduced gas emissions goals will be. Countries such as China and Germany are not on pace to meet their emissions goals.⁴⁷ The exit of the U.S. may have received widespread condemnation from the global community, but without an enforcement mechanism and U.S. participation, the U.S. may have created a permission structure for other countries to miss their emissions deadlines. A permission structure to miss emissions deadlines will effectively kill the agreement, even if it exists in name only.

VIII. Conclusion

Without the United States, the Paris Climate Accord is likely to join the long list of international environmental agreements that set broad goals but fail when it comes to execution. As the world's second largest polluter, it is essential that the U.S. is an active participant in the process to reduce emissions and temperature rise. The lack of U.S. participation allows other countries who are concerned about the impact of the agreement on their economy to leave or choose to stay in the agreement but never really meet the agreed upon goals because there is no enforcement mechanism.

The United States has always been an unreliable partner when it comes to working with international organizations and other states, under both Democratic and Republican administrations. There is a historical tendency for the U.S. not to join international agreements or to only agree to participate in treaties that lack an enforcement. The lack of American participation has primarily been explained by concerns over losing American sovereignty; however, President Trump has signaled a shift towards a stronger partisan appeal as his motive for U.S. withdrawal. In an era of hyper-partisanship, President Trump is

⁴⁵ Saad. "Pathways of Harm..." 47–51.

⁴⁶ Goldstein, Bernard D., and Michael R. Greenberg. 2018. "Global Climate Change and the 'So What?' Issue: Reversing the Impact of Donald Trump." *American Journal of Public Health* 108 (May): S78–79. <http://proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/login?ins=tu&url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=129341177&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

⁴⁷ Press, Associated. "'It's a Fact': Merkel Calls out Trump over Climate Change Stance." NBCNews.com. July 19, 2018. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/merkel-calls-out-trump-over-paris-accord-renews-commitment-fight-n884631>.

able to make unpopular decisions without facing serious political repercussions because he knows he has a strong floor of political support within his own party.

The Republican Party is more likely to oppose climate change proposals because they are inherently in conflict with the fundamental requirements for effective climate change policy. President Trump is a continued example of conservative ideology. His focus on cutting regulations to promote business, American exceptionalism, and unilateralism makes it fundamentally improbable that he would continue with such a deal.

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