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## **LINK BETWEEN GLOBAL WARMING AND HURRICANES IS IGNORED BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, SAY LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**NEW ORLEANS** – Three local organizations have joined with national organizations to protest the suppression of scientific evidence by two government agencies regarding the link between global warming and increased hurricane intensity.

The local groups – the Alliance for Affordable Energy, the New Orleans Group of the Sierra Club, and the Louisiana Climate Action Network – are protesting the stances of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Hurricane Center which claim that the recent upsurge in hurricane activity and destruction is part of a natural cycle and has nothing to do with human-induced climate change.

“NOAA's mission is to save lives, mitigate property loss, and improve economic efficiency by issuing the best watches, warnings, forecasts and analyses of hazardous tropical weather, and by increasing understanding of these hazards,” says Casey Demoss Roberts of the New Orleans Group of the Sierra Club. She is representing the three organizations at a press conference and vigil at NOAA and NHC offices in Maryland. “Ignoring inconvenient evidence will not make the problem of global warming go away. It only puts our coastal areas at unnecessary risk, which is in direct violation of NOAA's mission.”

The three Louisiana organizations insist that it is “irresponsible of the government to ignore the numerous studies showing a link between increased ocean surface temperatures due to global warming and an increase in intensity, lifespan and destructive power of hurricanes, when millions of Americans are at risk from these more intense storms.” They cite several scientific studies to support their claims.

- In a landmark study published in *Science Magazine* last year, Dr. Peter Webster of Georgia Institute of Technology found that the average strength and duration of hurricanes has doubled during the last 30 years.
- In a study published in *Nature Magazine* in August 2005, Dr. Kerry Emanuel of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology documented the observed increases in storm intensity and their correlation to increases in sea surface temperatures.
- Greg Holland of the National Center for Atmospheric Research says “the hurricanes we are seeing are indeed a direct result of climate change”; the wind

and warmer water conditions that fuel tropical storms are "increasingly due to greenhouse gases. There seems to be no other conclusion you can logically draw."

However, contend the local organizations, the NOAA makes no mention of such studies on its website. It also says that Max Mayfield, director of the NHC, went before a U.S. Senate panel last fall to deny any substantive connection between global warming and hurricanes. The groups say that *The Washington Post* and other media organizations have documented the ongoing campaign at the NOAA to cover up global warming data. They say NOAA climate scientists are being intimidated from talking to the press and their papers are being withheld from publication.

"It is important that Louisianans not follow the dangerous example of the NOAA," says Micah Walker Parkin of the Alliance for Affordable Energy. "Restoration costs, hurricane damage and the pace of coastal wetlands loss will escalate if we ignore global warming. "It is time for our state and nation to take decisive actions to reduce carbon emissions to slow the pace of global warming, and the multitude of threats Louisianans are facing because of it."

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The Sierra Club's 750,000 members work together to protect communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Delta (Louisiana) chapter of the Sierra Club has more than 3,500 members and has been active in local conservation projects for more than 30 years. For more information, contact the organization's website: [www.louisiana.sierraclub.org](http://www.louisiana.sierraclub.org).