

The Koch Donor Network Is a Third Party

The American public must wake up to the fact that, politically speaking, we are no longer living in the old American world of two major parties, the Democratic and the Republican. There are now three major parties: the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, and the Koch party – with the Koch party, in the latest remake of “Invasion of the Body-Snatchers,” actively engaged in increasing its control of the Republican Party.

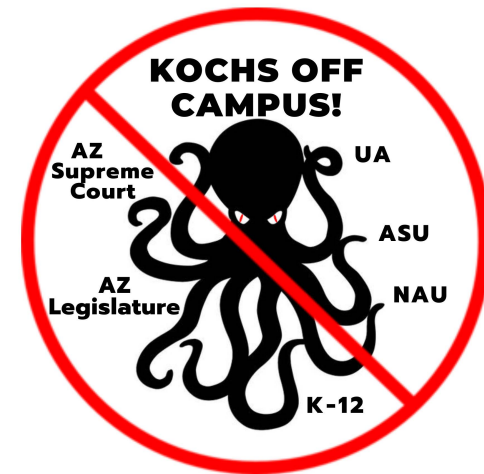
Charles Koch and his allies, more and more openly now, are mounting a coordinated, nationwide assault on the people of this country. We must name our enemy, know our enemy, and mount a coordinated, nationwide resistance to our enemy.

UA Freedom Center Builds Intellectual Weapons for the Koch Donor Network

Here in Tucson, that begins with the “Freedom Center” that the Koch network created at the University of Arizona. Although the Freedom Center may not immediately spring to mind when we think of the struggle for environmental and climate justice, the Freedom Center is nonetheless using our taxes to build intellectual weapons that the Koch network uses to fight action on climate change. Ultimately, the survival of a livable world is at stake.



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THE KOCHS, ENEMIES OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Climate change is undoubtedly the main threat nowadays to the future of the global environment. It is already wreaking havoc on every country on the planet, pummeling the human race and the natural world with drought, floods, huge wildfires, extreme temperatures, and extreme storms. Sea levels are rising, and the average global temperature continues to climb. And it is only getting started!

Meanwhile, at least 95% of climate scientists believe that climate change is largely human-caused. And yet, polls consistently show that a significantly higher percentage of people in the U.S. than people in (say) France, Germany, or Norway either deny climate change outright or think that it is not human-caused (aka anthropogenic). Why?

A major reason—perhaps *the* major reason—is the disinformation campaign waged over the past quarter-century by the American fossil fuel industry, and in particular by Charles Koch and his late brother David, whose net worth of around \$100 billion rested largely on that very industry.

Kochs Sowed Doubt About Climate Change

The Koch brothers, along with other billionaires and millionaires in their donor network, used the same techniques as the tobacco industry once used to sell us "safe" cigarettes that later killed off a whole generation. That is, they sowed doubt and confusion in people's minds about the reality and the causes of climate change, when in fact the science was clear about its origins and its causes. The result is that the U.S. has dragged its feet on taking serious action to halt or even slow emissions that cause climate change.

This behavior has had the further effect of badly delaying action at the international level. As a result, the major changes in energy production, fossil fuel use and patterns of consumption that should have begun in the 1990s are only now beginning to happen and very slowly at best.

Kochs Politicized the Issue of Climate Change

The Kochs and their network of fellow donors, through the huge influence of their money on the political process in the U.S., also helped to politicize the issue of climate change, making it far harder to address. Republican voters are dramatically more likely than Democratic voters to deny climate change outright or to deny that it is human-caused.

Before the 2010 Tea Party movement (which Koch operatives brought into being), the Republican Party was discussing how to deal with climate change. Now, it's apparently the *only* conservative political party on Earth that officially denies that humans actually do cause climate change. Maybe money can't buy you love, but it certainly can influence politicians.

Koch Pollution of Our Air and Water, Attack On Our Public Lands

Of course, climate change isn't the only environmental problem we face in the U.S. There's also environmental pollution and the harm it does to human health. Charles Koch and his donor network have been busy here as well, rolling back environmental regulations at state and national levels. Anything that gets in the way of the fossil fuel industry and its profits is fair game, including national parks and monuments, endangered species, and local human populations. And don't blame it just on Trump. Scholar and author Nancy MacLean, in her book, *Democracy in Chains*, writes about how the Koch political operation has "occupied" the Republican Party since 2008. Many of Trump's appointees (not to mention Vice-President Pence) had very strong ties to the Kochs and their money, and in attacking environmental regulations they were doing the Kochs' bidding. Despite statements to the contrary, Koch network dollars continue to flow to Trump supported politicians.