



**Written Testimony of David Arkush**

**Director, Public Citizen's Climate Program**

**Before the Subcommittee on Federal Courts, Oversight, Agency Action and Federal  
Rights of the Senate Judiciary Committee**

**Enter the Dragon—China and the Left's Lawfare Against American Energy  
Dominance**

**June 25, 2025**

### **Introduction**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Public Citizen, a national public interest advocacy organization with more than 500,000 members and supporters.

States and local governments have ample reason to hold Big Oil accountable in court for costs related to climate change. These elected representatives are pursuing a basic principle of fairness: If you make a mess, you should clean it up. This rule—that the person who causes damage should pay for it—is not just something we teach toddlers. It's a principle as old as law itself, likely present in every legal system since the Code of Hammurabi was drafted nearly 4,000 years ago.<sup>1</sup>

Now some are arguing that the oil industry—one of the most powerful and most harmful actors in human history—should get a special exemption. It should not.

---

<sup>1</sup> *See, e.g.*, CODE OF HAMMURABI ("233. If a builder build a house for some one, even though he has not yet completed it; if then the walls seem toppling, the builder must make the walls solid from his own means."); *id.* ("263. If he kill the cattle or sheep that were given to him, he shall compensate the owner with cattle for cattle and sheep for sheep."), <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/ancient/hamframe.asp>.

Big Oil has made trillions of dollars in profits over the past several decades.<sup>2</sup> It has also killed millions of people and caused trillions of dollars in damage.<sup>3</sup> The oil industry knew these harms were going to happen, and it caused them anyway. Worse, it lied about them so that it could keep making profits from its devastatingly harmful conduct for as long as possible.

The costs of Big Oil's malfeasance are increasingly falling on ordinary Americans and state and local governments. In the past year alone, climate-related harms cost Americans nearly \$1 trillion—more than 3% of our gross domestic product, amounting to a massive “stealth tariff on consumer spending.”<sup>4</sup> Should taxpayers be saddled with these costs? No. The companies that caused the harm should pay. That is what state and local governments are trying to accomplish by suing Big Oil.

## I. What Fossil Fuel Companies Knew

The oil industry has known for decades that its business model would cause catastrophic harm—in the words of a 1980 American Petroleum Institute memo, “globally catastrophic” harm.<sup>5</sup> The industry recognized there was “scientific consensus” on the fundamentals of climate science in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Matthew Taylor & Jillian Ambrose, *Revealed: Big Oil's Profits Since 1990 Total Nearly \$2tn*, The Guardian (Feb. 12, 2020), <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/feb/12/revealed-big-oil-profits-since-1990-total-nearly-2tn-bp-shell-chevron-exxon>.

<sup>3</sup> See *infra* section \_\_\_\_.

<sup>4</sup> Eric Rosten, *US Spending on Climate Damage Nears \$1 Trillion Per Year*, BLOOMBERG (June 17, 2025), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-06-17/us-spending-on-climate-damage-nears-1-trillion-per-year>.

<sup>5</sup> Jimmie Nelson, *The CO2 Problem: Addressing Research Agenda Development*, American Petroleum Institute, Climate Investigations Center, 13 (Mar. 18, 1980), <https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/gffl0228>.

<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., J.F. Black, *The Greenhouse Effect*, Exxon Research and Engineering Company, 1 (June 6, 1978) (“[T]here is general scientific agreement that the most likely manner in which mankind is influencing the global climate is through carbon dioxide release from the burning of fossil fuels.”), <https://insideclimatenews.org/documents/james-black-1977-presentation>; *id.* (“[C]urrent scientific opinion overwhelmingly favors attributing atmospheric carbon dioxide increase to fossil fuel combustion.”); Letter from Roger Cohen to A.M. Natkin, 1 (Sep. 2, 1982) (“[O]ver the past several years a clear scientific consensus has emerged regarding the expected climatic effects of increased atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>.”), <https://insideclimatenews.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Consensus>; *id.* (stating that there was “unanimous agreement in the scientific community that a temperature increase of this magnitude would bring about significant changes in the earth’s climate” and that “[t]he time required for doubling of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> depends on future world consumption of fossil fuels.”); see also Joseph M. Carlson, *The Greenhouse Effect*, ExxonMobil (Aug. 3, 1988), <http://www.climatefiles.com/exxonmobil/566>.

Other industry documents from decades ago said greenhouse gas pollution from burning fossil fuels would do “great irreversible harm to our planet.”<sup>7</sup> They predicted that climate change from burning fossil fuels would have “serious consequences for man’s comfort and survival,”<sup>8</sup> causing “suffering and death due to thermal extremes.”<sup>9</sup> They predicted it would create

more violent weather—more storms, more droughts, more deluges . . . .  
. Agricultural patterns would be most dramatically changed.  
Something as simple as a moderate change in rainfall pattern disrupts  
ecosystems, and many species of trees, plants, animals and insects  
would not be able to move and adapt.<sup>10</sup>

They projected devastating effects on immigration due to changes in the habitability of localities that are home to billions of people:

The potential refugee problem . . . could be unprecedented. Africans  
would push into Europe, Chinese into the Soviet Union [this was  
1989], Latins into the United States, Indonesians into Australia.  
Boundaries would count for little—overwhelmed by the numbers.  
Conflicts would abound. Civilization could prove a fragile thing.<sup>11</sup>

## II. What Fossil Fuel Companies Did

Rather than cease engaging in such dangerous activity, and rather than continue doing it while alerting the public—indeed, *rather than merely keep quiet about it*—fossil fuel companies chose to pursue an aggressive disinformation campaign of lying about climate science to deceive the public and policymakers.

Starting in the late 1980s, the oil industry began developing and orchestrating a multi-decade, coordinated campaign to, in its words, “reposition global warming as

---

<sup>7</sup> Memo from M.B. Glaser to Exxon Management, *CO2 Greenhouse Effect* (Nov. 12, 1982), <https://www.climatefiles.com/exxonmobil/1982-memo-to-exxon-management-about-co2-greenhouse-effect/>.

<sup>8</sup> Alan Oppenheis & William I. Donn, *Climate Models and CO2 Warming*, LAMONT-DOHERTY GEOPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, 4–5 (Mar. 16, 1982).

<sup>9</sup> Presentation by D.J. Devlin to Exxon Management, *Purported Impact of Climate Change on Human Health* (1996), <https://www.climatefiles.com/exxonmobil/1996-purported-impact-climate-change-human-health/>.

<sup>10</sup> Shell Confidential Group Planning, *Scenarios 1989–2010, Challenge and Response*, Shell, 36 (Oct. 1989), <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/23735737-1989-oct-confidential-shell-group-planning-scenarios-1989-2010-challenge-and-response-disc-climate-refugees-and-shift-to-non-fossil-fuels>.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

theory (not fact),” all for the purpose of maintaining or increasing fossil fuel sales, market share, and profits. For example, in August 1988, Exxon developed a memo laying out “The Exxon Position” on climate change. That “position” was to “[e]mphasize the uncertainty in scientific conclusions” in order to “[r]esist” public discussion of climate change, as it could lead to “development of nonfossil fuel resources.”<sup>12</sup>

Over the ensuing years, the industry engaged in a range of deceptive strategies, which it laid out clearly in 1998 document. That year, a group of twelve people, including representatives from ExxonMobil, Chevron, and other fossil fuel-related groups, met at API headquarters and drafted the Global Climate Science Communications Action Plan, a document that accurately describes exactly the fraud conspiracy the industry executed. The document specified that their scheme was to get both “average citizens” and the media to recognize that there was not a scientific consensus on climate change—which, according to their own internal assessments was a fraudulent claim—and then to make this fraudulent claim a new “conventional wisdom.”<sup>13</sup>

The industry chose this strategy because its polling showed that introducing the fraudulent specter of scientific doubt was the most effective way to make Americans oppose climate action.<sup>14</sup> The core of the Action Plan was a scheme to communicate the fossil fuel industry’s claims of denial and uncertainty to the media, the public, government officials, and teachers and students. That’s just what these companies have been doing, using the following strategies:

1. Publishing false and deceptive statements and advertisements related to climate change.
2. Identifying, “educating,” and financially rewarding scientists to generate research results, present papers, plan and attend conferences, and act as spokespersons for efforts to defraud the public into doubting the clear scientific consensus on climate change.
3. Targeting, harassing, and attempting to discredit activists engaged in researching and communicating the realities of climate change.

---

<sup>12</sup> Joseph M. Carlson, *The Greenhouse Effect*, ExxonMobil (Aug. 3, 1988), <http://www.climatefiles.com/exxonmobil/566>.

<sup>13</sup> See Email from Joe Walker to Global Climate Science Team, Global Climate Science Communications Action Plan (Apr. 3, 1998), <https://insideclimatenews.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Global-Climate-Science-Communications-Plan-1998.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> *Climate Deception Dossier #5: Coal’s ‘Information Council on the Environment’ Sham*, Union of Concerned Scientists, [https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2015/07/Climate-Deception-Dossier-5\\_ICE.pdf](https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2015/07/Climate-Deception-Dossier-5_ICE.pdf).

4. Engaging in fraudulent campaigns to frame natural gas as a climate solution.
5. Engaging in fraudulent “greenwashing” efforts designed to deceive consumers and the public by falsely promoting their products and brands as clean and climate-friendly.<sup>15</sup>

These strategies are already the basis for a civil racketeering suit filed by 37 municipalities in Puerto Rico against the fossil fuel industry. And they are strikingly similar to the Big Tobacco racket that was prosecuted in *United States v. Philip Morris*, in which a group of cigarette companies were successfully sued for racketeering for their scheme to distort and deny the scientific connection between their tobacco products and lung cancer. Indeed, the lead counsel in *United States v. Philip Morris* has argued that fossil fuel actors’ climate racketeering should be similarly investigated and possibly prosecuted.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps even more remarkable than the campaign of deception, it is clear that the industry believed the climate science itself. While oil companies were lying to the public about purported scientific uncertainty, they were using the same science to guide their business operations. For example, in the 1990s, they raised the height of offshore oil platforms to account for the sea-level rise they predicted.<sup>17</sup> They did this while paying for ads in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* that said things like, “Let’s face it: The science of climate change is too uncertain to mandate a plan of action that could plunge economies into turmoil.”<sup>18</sup>

### III. The Costs of Fossil Fuel Companies’ Malfeasance

It is important not to lose sight of the human costs of climate change. Air pollution caused primarily by burning fossil fuels is one of the leading killers globally, causing an estimated one in five deaths worldwide.<sup>19</sup> Climate change kills people in a breathtakingly broad number of ways: dangerous heat, more intense storms and

---

<sup>15</sup> See Email from Joe Walker to Global Climate Science Team, Global Climate Science Communications Action Plan (Apr. 3, 1998), <https://insideclimatenews.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Global-Climate-Science-Communications-Plan-1998.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> See, e.g., DENIAL, DISINFORMATION, AND DOUBLESPEAK: BIG OIL’S EVOLVING EFFORTS TO AVOID ACCOUNTABILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, BEFORE THE S. COMM. ON BUDGET (May 1, 2025) (testimony of Sharon Y. Eubanks, Former Director, U.S. Department of Justice Tobacco Litigation Team), <https://www.budget.senate.gov/download/ms-sharon-eubanks-testimony---senate-budget-committee>.

<sup>17</sup> Amy Lieberman & Susanne Rust, *Big Oil Braced for Global Warming While It Fought Regulations*, L.A. TIMES (Dec. 31, 2015), <http://graphics.latimes.com/oil-operations/>.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> Karn Vohra et al., *Global Mortality from Outdoor Fine Particle Pollution Generated by Fossil Fuel Combustion: Results from GEOS-Chem*, 195 Environmental Research 110,754 (2021), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0013935121000487>.

flooding, increased disease and food and water insecurity, and even increased violent conflict.<sup>20</sup>

This testimony, however, will focus on economic costs: rising insurance premiums and insurance withdrawals, harmful impacts on housing markets, and costs to state and local governments.

According to Bloomberg Intelligence analysis, insurance premiums have doubled in the United States since 2017.<sup>21</sup> While the sudden loss of insurers from states like Florida, Louisiana, and California has captured national headlines, newly released federal data shows insurers have been quietly dropping policies in climate-vulnerable zip codes across the country for years, with at least 1.9 million policies dropped since 2018.<sup>22</sup> Figures 1 and 2 below show 2022 insurance premiums by ZIP code and 2023 insurance nonrenewals by county.

---

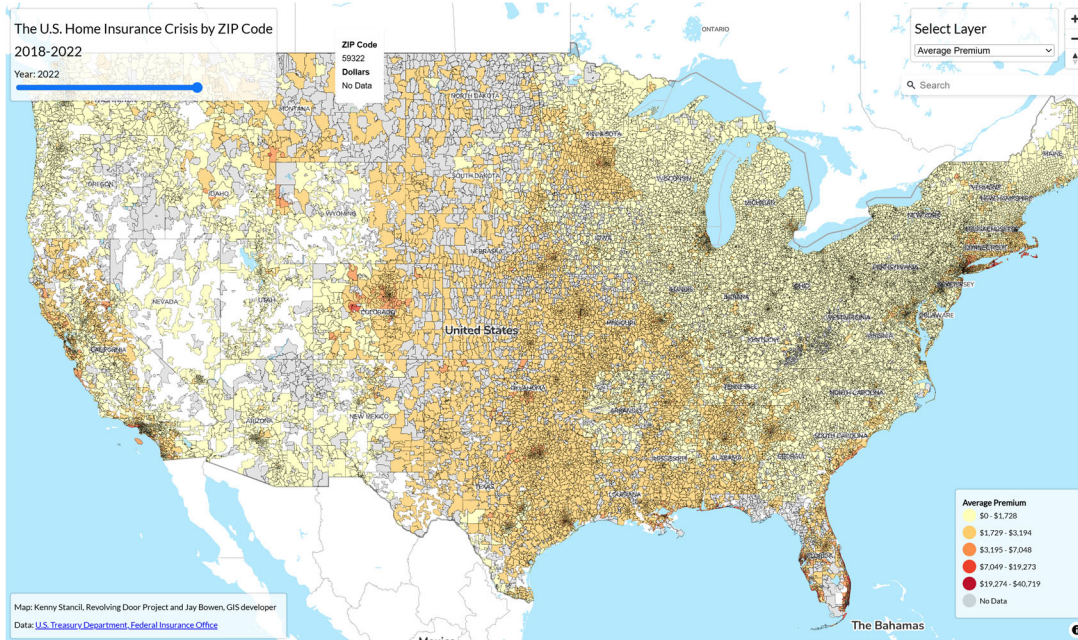
<sup>20</sup> See, e.g., Katrin Burkart et al., *Projecting Global Mortality Due to Non-Optimal Temperature from 2020 to 2100: a Global Burden of Disease Forecasting Study* (Nov. 18, 2020) (on file with Social Science Research Network) (this is a preprint published on SSRN in coordination with The Lancet); R. Daniel Bressler et al., *Estimates of Country Level Temperature-Related Mortality Damage Functions*, 11 SCI. REP. 20282 (2021) (providing a central estimate of a 4.2% increase in global mortality from temperature change alone by 2100 under RCP 8.5 assumptions); Whanhee Lee et al., *Projections of Excess Mortality Related to Diurnal Temperature Range Under Climate Change Scenarios: A Multi-Country Modeling Study*, 4 LANCET PLANET HEALTH 512, 518 Figure 2 (2020) (reflecting a projection that excess mortality from higher daytime temperatures in the United States will increase from 3.0% in the period 2010–2019 to roughly 5.5% by 2100 under RCP 8.5 assumptions); Drew Shindell et al., *The Effects of Heat Exposure on Human Mortality Throughout the United States*, *GeoHealth*, Mar. 26, 2020, at 1 (estimating 12,000 premature deaths per year in the United States currently caused by climate change related heat, rising by 97,000 heat-related deaths every year by 2100 under RCP 8.5 assumptions and 36,000 per year under an RCP 4.5 scenario); Luke Kemp et al., *Climate Endgame: Exploring Catastrophic Climate Change Scenarios*, PROCEEDINGS NAT'L ACAD. SCI., Aug. 1, 2022, at 6 (“There are many potential contributors to climate-induced morbidity and mortality, but the ‘four horsemen’ of the climate change end game are likely to be famine and undernutrition, extreme weather events, conflict, and vector-borne diseases.”).

<sup>21</sup> Eric Rosten, *US Spending on Climate Damage Nears \$1 Trillion Per Year*, BLOOMBERG (June 17, 2025), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-06-17/us-spending-on-climate-damage-nears-1-trillion-per-year>. See also *Overburdened: The Dramatic Increase in Homeowners Insurance Premiums and Its Impacts on American Homeowners*, Consumer Federation of America (Apr. 1, 2025) (reporting that from 2021 to 2024, insurance premiums increased in 95% of US ZIP codes, including a rise of more than 30% in one-third, and that insurance premiums rose twice as fast as inflation), <https://consumerfed.org/overburdened/>.

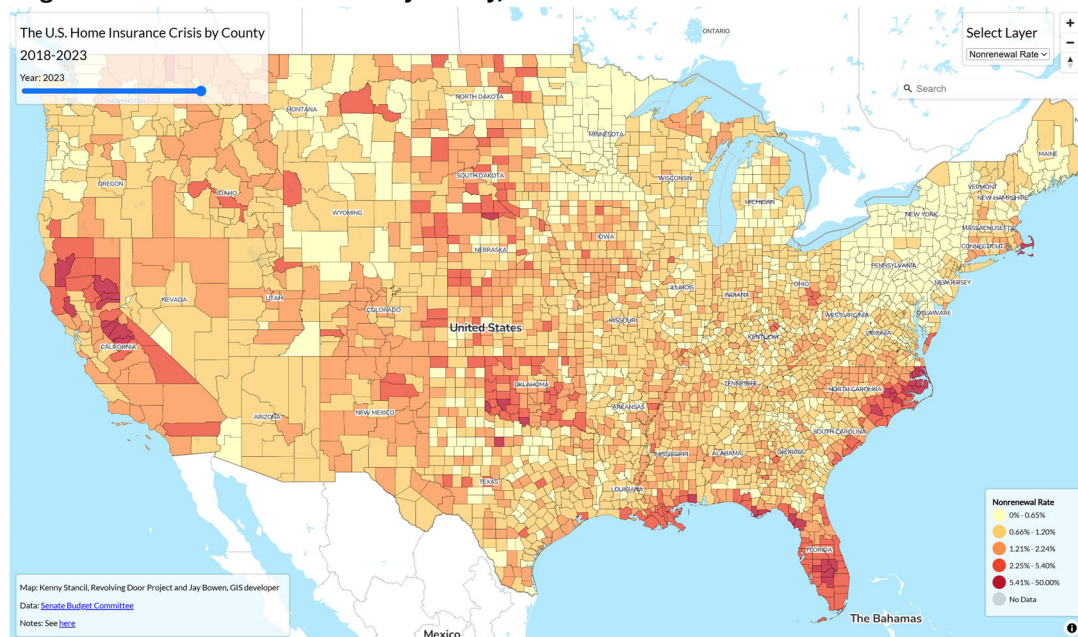
<sup>22</sup> See Christopher Flavelle, *Insurers Are Deserting Homeowners as Climate Shocks Worsen*, N.Y. TIMES (Dec. 18, 2024), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/12/18/climate/insurance-non-renewal-climate-crisis.html>; Sam Karlin, *Louisiana Welcomed Small Insurers Looking to Make Money Fast. Then the House of Cards Collapsed*, NOLA.COM, (Jan. 11, 2024), [https://www.nola.com/news/business/11-of-12-failed-louisiana-insurers-paid-money-to-affiliates/article\\_a24022e2-af37-11ee-b734-ff759f54bb34.html](https://www.nola.com/news/business/11-of-12-failed-louisiana-insurers-paid-money-to-affiliates/article_a24022e2-af37-11ee-b734-ff759f54bb34.html); Jordan Valinsky, *Farmers Insurance Pulls out of Florida, Affecting 100,000 Policyholders*, CNN BUSINESS (July 12, 2023), <https://www.cnn.com/2023/07/12/business/farmers-insurance-florida>; Michael R. Blood, *California*



**Figure 1: Insurance premiums by ZIP code, 2022.**



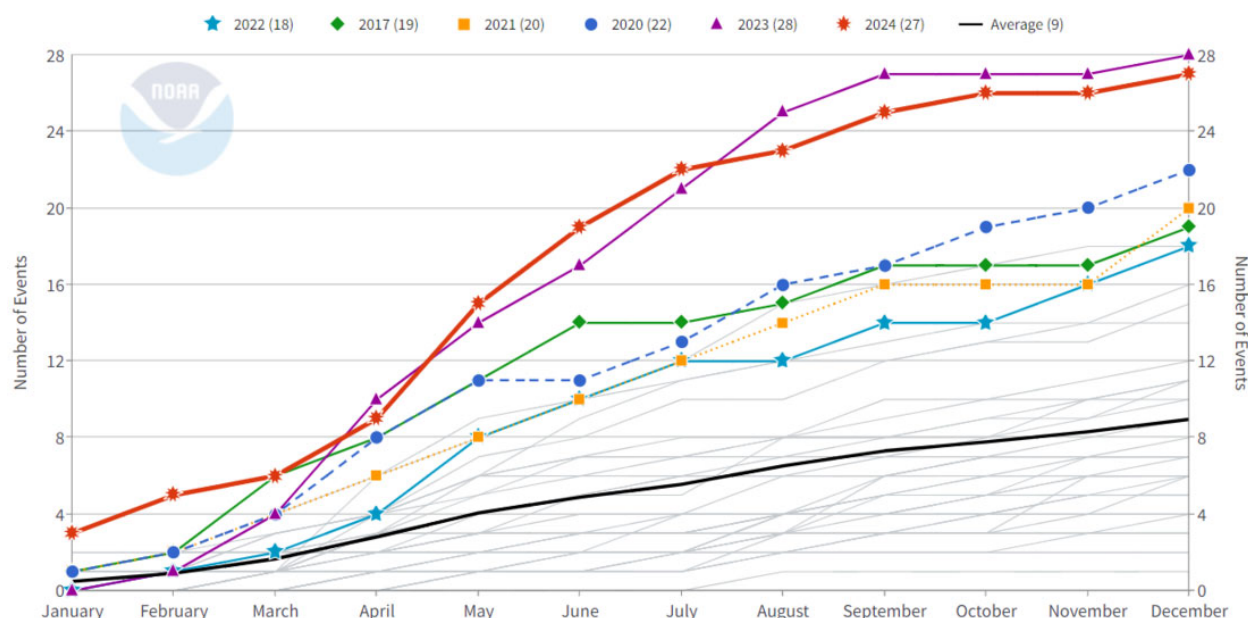
**Figure 2: Insurance nonrenewals by county, 2023.**



*Insurance Market Rattled by Withdrawal of Major Companies*, AP NEWS (June 5, 2023), <https://apnews.com/article/california-wildfire-insurance-e31bef0ed7eeddcde096a5b8f2c1768f>; STAFF OF S. BUDGET COMM., 118TH CONG., NEXT TO FALL: THE CLIMATE-DRIVEN INSURANCE CRISIS IS HERE—AND GETTING WORSE (Dec. 2024), [https://www.budget.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/next\\_to\\_fall\\_the\\_climate-driven\\_insurance\\_crisis\\_is\\_here\\_and\\_getting\\_worse.pdf](https://www.budget.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/next_to_fall_the_climate-driven_insurance_crisis_is_here_and_getting_worse.pdf).

The cause of the turmoil in insurance markets is clear: a sharp increase in climate-driven harms. The year 2024 was the 14th consecutive year during which at least 10 separate climate-related disasters caused at least \$1 billion in damage.<sup>23</sup> Figure 3 below illustrates the trend of increased billion-dollar disasters.

**Figure 3: 1980–2024 United States Billion-Dollar Disasters (CPI-Adjusted)**



Rising insurance costs are being driven not just by the highest-profile events, like destructive wildfires and hurricanes, but also from what otherwise might be ordinary storms. Indeed, wind and hailstorms, common in the Upper Midwest, are second only to hurricanes in costs.<sup>24</sup> For that reason, insurance costs are rising steeply in the Midwest, not just in coastal areas or those prone to wildfires.<sup>25</sup>

While insurance costs are skyrocketing, an increasing proportion of losses are uninsured, leaving households and governments to bear costs for which they are not prepared. In 2022, only an estimated 60% of climate-related losses were covered by

<sup>23</sup> Adam B. Smith, *2024: An Active Year of U.S. Billion-dollar Weather and Climate Disasters*, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (2025), <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/blogs/beyond-data/2024-active-year-us-billion-dollar-weather-and-climate-disasters>.

<sup>24</sup> Tu-Uyen Tran, *Homeowners Insurance Costs Are Growing Fast But Coverage Is Shrinking*, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis (Aug. 28, 2024), <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2024/homeowners-insurance-costs-are-growing-fast-but-coverage-is-shrinking>.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Copley, *Insurance Costs Are Soaring Around Tornado Alley. Hail Is the Big Problem.*, NPR (May 23, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2025/05/23/nx-s1-5407522/insurance-tornadoes-hail-midwest>.



insurance.<sup>26</sup> This “protection gap” will have major impacts on household finances and housing affordability, with broader harmful effects on local and regional economies, and potentially on the stability of the financial system.<sup>27</sup> Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell recently told a Senate committee that in “10 or 15 years there are going to be regions of the country where you can’t get a mortgage. There won’t be ATMs. You know, the banks won’t have branches and things like that.”<sup>28</sup> This is a five-alarm fire for the entire nation’s economy and financial system.

At present, we are sleepwalking toward this disaster, with ordinary Americans and state and local governments bearing most of the costs.

Between 2011 and 2024, 99.5% of congressional districts experienced at least one federally declared major disaster due to extreme weather, affecting communities across political, urban-rural, and socioeconomic lines. These events, fueled by climate change, cost taxpayers \$117.9 billion in federal relief.<sup>29</sup>

Until 2016, the federal government covered up to one-third of climate-related disaster costs, for both prevention and recovery, but that proportion has now fallen to just 2%.<sup>30</sup> These costs do not disappear. They are borne instead by state and local governments—and American families, both directly and through taxes they pay.

Consumer Reports estimates that an American child born in 2024 can expect to pay at least \$500,000 and possibly as much as \$1,000,000 in climate costs over their lifetime due to a combination of lost income and higher expenses.<sup>31</sup> While Americans struggle to shoulder these additional burdens, their assets will face steep declines in value. Analysts at First Street project that climate change will erase \$1.47 trillion in property value over the next 30 years.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> Remarks by Secretary of the Treasury Janet L Yellen at Federal Advisory Committee on Insurance Meeting (Mar. 29, 2023), <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1375>.

<sup>27</sup> *See id.*

<sup>28</sup> Michael Martin, *Will It Become Impossible to Get a Mortgage in High-Risk Areas in a Decade?* NPR (Feb. 18 2025) <https://www.npr.org/2025/02/18/nx-s1-5294490/what-is-happening-to-the-availability-of-mortgage-insurance-in-disaster-areas>.

<sup>29</sup> Rebuild by Design, Atlas of Accountability (2011–2024), <https://rebuildbydesign.org/atlas-of-disaster/>.

<sup>30</sup> Eric Rosten, *US Spending on Climate Damage Nears \$1 Trillion Per Year*, BLOOMBERG (June 17, 2025), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-06-17/us-spending-on-climate-damage-nears-1-trillion-per-year>.

<sup>31</sup> Consumer Reports & ICF Incorporated, LLC, *Cost of Climate Change to an American Born in 2024* (Feb. 23, 2024), <https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ICF-CR-Cost-of-Climate-Change-Study.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> First Street, *Property Prices in Peril* (Feb. 3. 2025), <https://firststreet.org/research-library/property-prices-in-peril>.

The ability of state and local governments to cover rising costs due to climate change will increasingly be strained. Municipal bond markets appear not to have priced in much climate-related risk to date. When they do, governments will see much higher costs of borrowing, at the same time as their expenses are rising.<sup>33</sup> This problem will affect not just state and municipal governments, but school districts, transit authorities, and public utilities. After the devastating Los Angeles fires in January 2025, S&P Global Ratings downgraded the credit rating of the Los Angeles power and water utility, the nation's largest utility, due increased frequency and severity of wildfires, igniting fears that the \$4 trillion bond market may increasingly price in climate risk and compound the financial strain on municipal bond issuers.<sup>34</sup>

Disaster recovery is only part of the picture. Costs to prepare in advance are also extraordinary. Boston has estimated the cost of building a Netherlands- or Thames-river-style harbor barrier at \$11.8 billion.<sup>35</sup> New York City has considered a \$119 billion barrier to protect it from future storms like Hurricane Sandy.<sup>36</sup>

South Carolina, a state with an annual budget of just \$14.5 billion,<sup>37</sup> will need to pay a projected \$20.1 billion to defend businesses, homes, and roads against chronic flooding by 2040 under a moderate sea-level rise scenario.<sup>38</sup> The top ten states facing these costs include five represented by members of this Subcommittee. Ranked by the highest costs, those states are Louisiana (#2), North Carolina(#3), California (#8), South Carolina (#9), and Texas (#10).<sup>39</sup> These costs are just to protect coastal communities from sea-level rise, not for other climate-related harms.

---

<sup>33</sup> See Billy Nauman, *Municipal Bond Issuers Face Steeper Borrowing Costs from Climate Change*, FINANCIAL TIMES (Jan. 7, 2020), <https://www.ft.com/content/6794c3d2-1d7d-11ea-9186-7348c2f183af>; Center for American Progress, *Climate Change and Municipal Finance*, May 6, 2020, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/climate-change-municipal-finance/>.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Frank, *\$4T Municipal Bond Market Wakes Up to Climate Risk. (With Help from Trump.)*, E&E News (Feb. 25, 2025), <https://www.eenews.net/articles/4t-municipal-bond-market-wakes-up-to-climate-risk-with-help-from-trump/>.

<sup>35</sup> Steven Mufson, *Boston Harbor Brings Ashore a New Enemy: Rising Seas*, WASH. POST (Feb. 19, 2020), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-solutions/2020/02/19/boston-prepares-rising-seas-climate-change/>.

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*

<sup>37</sup> Jeffrey Collins, *South Carolina's Budget Passes with a Big Raise in Lawmaker Pay*, AP NEWS (May 28, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/pay-raise-legislators-south-carolina-general-assembly-92c685410e6be35f8f802959bd6dd117>.

<sup>38</sup> CENTER FOR CLIMATE INTEGRITY & RESILIENT ANALYTICS, *HIGH TIDE TAX: THE PRICE TO PROTECT COASTAL COMMUNITIES FROM RISING SEAS* (June 2019), [https://www.climatecosts2040.org/files/ClimateCosts2040\\_Report.pdf](https://www.climatecosts2040.org/files/ClimateCosts2040_Report.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> Florida is #1. *See id.*

Many Texans have desired since 2008 to build an “Ike Dike” to protect the Houston and Galveston Bay areas from increasingly frequent and devastating hurricanes, but the proposal has foundered due to a projected cost of \$57 billion.<sup>40</sup> Ironically, the project would protect a major hub of the oil and petrochemical industry.<sup>41</sup> Although that industry created the very risk to be addressed and would be the most concentrated financial beneficiary of a solution—and although it has the cash to afford the project without flinching—it does not appear to have offered any contributions.<sup>42</sup> Instead, it appears content assume that the more than seven million human beings in the region who are concerned for their lives, property, and economy, or taxpayers across the country, will eventually pay the costs themselves. Taxpayers and state and local governments have struggled for nearly two decades to figure out how to fund the project without finding an answer.

### Conclusion

These are the reasons why state and local governments are suing Big Oil: to make it pay for a fraction of the colossal, budget-busting costs it has chosen to impose on them and their citizens, while profiting lavishly and lying about the harm it was causing.

---

<sup>40</sup> Kyle McClenagan, *Texas Governor Signs Bill to Create ‘Ike Dike’ Funding Account*, HOUSTON PUBLIC MEDIA (May 28, 2025), <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/infrastructure/2025/05/28/522457/state-legislature-passes-law-to-create-ike-dike-funding-account/>; Erin Douglas & Emily Foxhall, *Texas “Ike Dike” Coastal Barrier Project Could Cost \$57 Billion with Inflation, Army Corps Says*, TEXAS TRIBUNE (Sept. 28, 2023), <https://www.texastribune.org/2023/09/28/texas-ike-dike-coastal-barrier-army-corps/>.

<sup>41</sup> Shelby Webb, *Houston Is One Hurricane Away from an Oil and Gas Disaster*, E&E NEWS (June 3, 2025), <https://www.eenews.net/articles/houston-is-one-hurricane-away-from-an-oil-and-gas-disaster/>.

<sup>42</sup> Evan Mintz, *Build the Ike Dike!*, TEXAS MONTHLY (Oct. 2020), <https://www.texasmonthly.com/news-politics/build-ike-dike/>.