

Doubt climate change? Don't bother with public office

Maureen Fiedler | May. 16, 2014 Eco Catholic

My thinking about "climate change deniers" has progressed over the last few years, from amusement to utter frustration. Now, I'm ready to say to these folks: Believe what you want to believe " as private citizens. But don't run for public office.

Climate change today is a paramount moral issue. We must do something about it, or our planet will not survive as we know it. Reportedly, Pope Francis is [preparing a message](#) [1] on the environment, and could touch on climate change as part of it. And even Pope Benedict, often perceived as a "conservative," strongly [supported efforts](#) [2] to stem the tide of climate change. And the U.S. bishops staked out the [moral implications](#) [3] of climate change back in 2001.

We voters cannot afford to elect those who deny climate change and refuse to acknowledge its links with human actions. We cannot have them making decisions for society as a whole as president, governor or any type of legislator.

Now, I am not suggesting for a minute any *legal* disqualification, but I am suggesting that average voters concerned about the future of our planet should begin to label candidates who are "climate change deniers" as "unqualified." Anyone who rejects a scientific consensus -- put forward by [97 percent of climate scientists](#) [4] who have studied the issue, many of them for several decades -- is just not fit to be enacting laws that affect our energy sources and the environment.

Just recently, I listened to Florida Sen. Marco Rubio announce his latest position on climate change.

In an [interview Sunday](#) [5] with ABC's Jonathan Karl, Rubio said, "I do not believe that human activity is causing these dramatic changes to our climate the way these scientists are portraying it. " and I do not believe that the laws that they propose we pass will do anything about it, except it will destroy our economy."

Of course, nothing would be worse for our economy in the long run than leaving climate change unchecked.

The Beltway wisdom on Rubio? He wants to run for president. By some chance, do you suppose there is a connection between that desire and his denial of human-induced climate change -- given that big money in the fossil fuel industries bankrolls many candidates?

I have only one descriptive response for Rubio and his ilk: "unqualified."

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Links:

[1] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/eco-catholic/papal-encyclical-environment-process>

[2] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/eco-catholic/benedict-brought-theology-earth-environmental-movement>

[3] <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/global-climate-change-a-plea-for-dialogue-prudence-and-the-common-good.cfm>

[4] <http://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus>

[5] <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2014/05/sen-marco-rubio-yes-im-ready-to-be-president/>