



Sen. Debbie Stabenow released the list of more 1,400 climate studies that Department of Agriculture researchers have published. | Mark Wilson/Getty Images

AGRICULTURE

Senate Democrats release list of climate studies buried by Trump administration

By **HELENA BOTTEMILLER EVICH** | 09/19/2019 01:48 PM EDT | Updated 09/19/2019 02:57 PM EDT

Senate Democrats released on Thursday a report outlining dozens of times the Trump

administration has censored or minimized climate science across the federal government at agencies including the EPA and the Department of Homeland Security.

Sen. Debbie Stabenow, ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, also publicly released a list of more than 1,400 climate studies that Department of Agriculture researchers have published during the current administration after POLITICO reported that USDA buried its own research and failed to release its plan to study the issue. The matter is increasingly urgent for farmers and ranchers dealing with erratic and extreme weather.

The trove of studies by USDA researchers carry warnings about climate change that the government is largely not communicating to farmers and ranchers or the public. The list published includes research showing that climate change is likely to drive down yields for some crops, harm milk production, and lead to a drop in nutrient density for key crops like rice and wheat.

“These studies show how climate change is affecting crop production, disrupting how food is grown and increasing risk to communities,” Stabenow said during a press conference on Thursday. Stabenow also serves as chairwoman of the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee, the research arm of Senate Democrats.

The Michigan Democrat called it “outrageous” that “critical information for communities, for farmers, for those of us who care deeply about what’s happening to agriculture, these are not being shared with the people who need to know but they are being paid for by them, as taxpayers.”

A spokesperson for the Agriculture Department said it's "false" to suggest that the department is suppressing science.

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“We have repeatedly provided the Senate Agriculture Committee with evidence to the contrary, and the department has been transparent and communicative to the committee in response to their questions on research," the spokesperson said, in an email. "The list of studies linked in the report were provided by the USDA to the committee and are all publicly available."

The move comes as climate change is becoming an increasingly prominent issue in the Democratic presidential primary. The report was released ahead of several planned climate protests Friday and the United National Climate Action Summit in New York this weekend.

In their report, Senate Democrats allege that the Trump administration has repeatedly gone out of its way to undermine climate science.

The report pointed to President Donald Trump falsely claiming that Alabama had been under threat from Hurricane Dorian and his subsequent insistence on overruling the forecasting of NOAA scientists. It also noted the government released the Fourth National Climate Assessment — which warned of billions in damages and sweeping effects to public health and infrastructure — the day after Thanksgiving when most Americans are not paying attention to the news.

The roundup includes numerous instances where agencies, including FEMA, EPA, Department of Homeland Security and Interior Department, have dropped mention of climate change from key reports or websites.

“Frankly, this is just an overview because it’s being done every day,” Stabenow told reporters.

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