

Message

From: Stout, Robert [/O=MSXBP/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=ROBERT.STOUT]
Sent: 12/03/2017 17:46:05
To: Jefferiss, Paul H. [/O=MSXBP/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=Paul.Jefferiss]
Subject: RE: Trump aides weighing staying in Paris deal, rejecting Obama pledge

Well said. This is the cooler (and smarter) minds prevail scenario. But who knows? I personally feel that Ivanka and Jared might have a voice here. In the social milieu where they move, denying climate and withdrawing from Paris may feel . . . well, rude. A sad thought but may well be that this, rather than the science or policy considerations, may prove influential.

Bob

From: Jefferiss, Paul H.
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2017 1:41 PM
To: Stout, Robert
Cc: Emery, Dominic; Mather, Peter J; Mannion, Kathrina; van Hoogstraten, David Jan; Nolan, James
Subject: Re: Trump aides weighing staying in Paris deal, rejecting Obama pledge

Interesting. Obviously I don't know what will happen. But this looks the most obvious course of action to take. All the benefits and few of the risks. That was really why the Paris Agreement was designed the way it was - to enable flexible transition from one political regime to the next. No one is committed to anything, other than to stay in the game.

Sent from my iPhone

On 12 Mar 2017, at 17:27, Stout, Robert [REDACTED] wrote:

FYI in case you have not seen already. Consistent with what we've been hearing.

Bob

From: POLITICO Pro Energy <politicoemail@politicopro.com>
Date: March 9, 2017 at 2:30:45 PM CST
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Trump aides weighing staying in Paris deal, rejecting Obama pledge
Reply-To: POLITICO subscriptions <reply-fe92127375650d7e72-553241_HTML-694858465-1376319-40742@politicoemail.com>

Trump aides weighing staying in Paris deal, rejecting Obama pledge

By Andrew Restuccia

03/09/2017 03:00 PM EDT

Trump administration officials are considering a plan to remain part of the nearly 200-nation Paris climate change agreement, while weakening former President Barack Obama's pledge to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, multiple sources told POLITICO.

The plan has not yet won the buy-in of key Trump aides and the president has not signed off. Sources familiar with the plan cautioned that it remains in flux, and could be scuttled by Trump advisers who are critical of the agreement.

But keeping the U.S. in the 2015 Paris pact would be a victory for some in the Trump administration, including the president's daughter Ivanka and his son-in-law Jared Kushner, who have sought to boost the president's green credentials and fear that pulling out would damage relations with key U.S. allies. Many conservatives have been pushing President Donald Trump to withdraw from the deal altogether, as the president himself pledged to do during the campaign.

One way to square those conflicting imperatives would be to reject the pledge that Obama offered as part of the 2015 Paris pact — a non-binding target for reducing the United States' emissions of planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions. That's increasingly seen within the White House as a possible way forward.

Obama had pledged that by 2025 the U.S. would reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent to 28 percent below where they were in 2005.

Weakening Obama's pledge would probably frustrate many American allies, who see the United States' commitment to tackling climate change as a bedrock of the Paris agreement. It would also reflect the likelihood that Trump's push to revoke key Obama environmental regulations would make it more difficult to meet the existing target.

George David Banks, a White House senior adviser on international energy and environmental issues, has briefed people outside the administration on the plan in recent days, according to people who have spoken with him.

Banks discussed the plan during a Thursday meeting with about a dozen fossil fuel industry officials, according to people familiar with the closed-door discussion.

Banks did not respond to a request for comment. A White House spokeswoman said, "We have no announcements to make at this time."

It's unclear when the Trump administration will announce a final decision on its approach to Paris. Sources cautioned a verdict may not be made public for weeks or even months, and could hinge on broader energy-related discussions with other countries.

Ivanka Trump and Kushner, a senior adviser to the president, have been strong advocates of staying in the agreement, sources said. And other advisers raised fears that withdrawing altogether would greatly damage U.S. diplomatic relations with other countries.

Trump's appointees are separately taking steps to revoke regulations requiring cuts in greenhouse gas pollution from the nation's power plants, among other rollbacks of Obama-era environmental rules.

Those regulations were the bulwark of Obama's promise that the United States, the world's second-largest carbon polluter, would do its share to address the problem — even though scientists have said steeper cuts are needed to avoid catastrophic harm from climate change.

Trump's advisers have sometimes been at odds over how to approach Paris — and Trump's chief strategist, Stephen Bannon, is said to be advocating for withdrawing from the agreement. Bannon's influence with Trump could undercut the proposal to stay in the deal.

Some Trump supporters have even hoped he would pull out from the entire decades-old "framework" of United Nations climate negotiations. Such a step would have been even more extreme than former President George W. Bush's abandonment of the 1997 Kyoto climate accord, which made the U.S. an untrusted figure in international climate circles for years afterward.

To clinch the Paris agreement, the Obama administration had to pull off some tricky diplomatic gymnastics, bringing together rich and poor countries that had disagreed for decades about how to divide the burden of curbing the world's carbon output. The pact, reached in December 2015 after two weeks of negotiations in a Paris suburb, followed months of U.S. pressure on China and India to make their own commitments, despite arguments from the developing world that already-wealthy nations should be doing the lion's share.

Ultimately, the talks were successful because negotiators allowed countries to write their own domestic pledges to tackle climate change, rather than imposing across-the-board mandates to slash emissions.

Those pledges are largely nonbinding, which enabled Obama to avoid a politically disastrous ratification fight in the Senate. But that also makes it easier for Trump to change Obama's pledge.

Even if Obama's target remained in place, scientists and climate activists have warned that the deal won't cut carbon pollution enough to prevent the worst effects of climate change, including rising seas and worsening droughts and storms. Instead, they said, countries would need to steadily escalate their targets.

The agreement calls on countries to aim to limit global warming to "well below" 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit from pre-industrial levels, and it said countries should "pursue efforts" to keep temperature increases to 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit. Under a business-as-usual scenario, global temperatures could rise by between 4.7 and 8.6 degrees Fahrenheit by the end of the century, according to scientists, an increase that would have catastrophic consequences for the planet.

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