

Congress of the United States

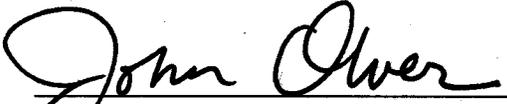
Washington, DC 20515

February 25, 2004

Dear Colleague:

We would like to draw your attention to an article that appeared in *Fortune Magazine* on February 9, 2004 entitled "The Pentagon's Weather Nightmare." Below is an excerpt of this article which summarizes a Pentagon report on the effects abrupt climate change could have on national security. To read the article in its entirety, please visit <http://www.fortune.com> and click on "archives" or search for "weather nightmare."

Sincerely,


John W. Olver
Co-chair, Climate Change Caucus


Wayne T. Gilchrest
Co-chair, Climate Change Caucus



The Pentagon's Weather Nightmare

The climate could change radically, and fast. That would be the mother of all national security issues.

FORTUNE

Monday, January 26, 2004

By David Stipp

.... Though Mother Nature caused past abrupt climate changes, the one that may be shaping up today probably has more to do with us. In 2001 an international panel of climate experts concluded that there is increasingly strong evidence that most of the global warming observed over the past 50 years is attributable to human activities—mainly the burning of fossil fuels such as oil and coal, which release heat-trapping carbon dioxide. Indicators of the warming include shrinking Arctic ice, melting alpine glaciers, and markedly earlier springs at northerly latitudes. A few years ago such changes seemed signs of possible trouble for our kids or grandkids. Today they seem portents of a cataclysm that may not conveniently wait until we're history.

Accordingly, the spotlight in climate research is shifting from gradual to rapid change. In 2002 the National Academy of Sciences issued a report concluding that human activities could trigger abrupt change. Last year the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, included a session at which Robert Gagosian, director of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts, urged policymakers to consider the implications of possible abrupt climate change within two decades.

Such jeremiads are beginning to reverberate more widely. Billionaire Gary Comer, founder of Lands' End, has adopted abrupt climate change as a philanthropic cause. Hollywood has also discovered the issue—next summer 20th Century Fox is expected to release *The Day After Tomorrow*, a big-budget disaster movie starring Dennis Quaid as a scientist trying to save the world from an ice age precipitated by global warming.

Fox's flick will doubtless be apocalyptically edifying. But what would abrupt climate change really be like?