

## Climate can't afford our apathy

Editor:

Kudos for devoting a recent column to climate change.

Imagine you ate the same quantity and selection of food every day, staying at a stable weight and health. Then new stress at work meant, in addition to what you had been eating, you added one candy bar per day but you added no extra exercise. One extra candy bar doesn't seem like a big change, but it would amount to 1.5 pounds weight gain in a month.

No reason for alarm. After a year, it would be 18 pounds. After 20 years? Alarmed?

At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, humans started adding extra CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere. The planet had been on a stable CO<sub>2</sub> diet. The planet had no way to use extra CO<sub>2</sub>, so it started accumulating in the atmosphere. Mid-twentieth century, fossil fuel use accelerated and daily CO<sub>2</sub> emissions soared.

We learn: humans can profoundly affect this big, magnificent planet, even though we are small, insignificant creatures.

As for 134-year temperature record not seeming statistically relevant, climate scientists have determined historical temperatures based on tree-growth patterns, ice samples and other techniques. They can reconstruct average temperatures going back about 1,000 years. Their work shows that, while temperatures varied in the past, they moved slowly. In the case of our current warming period, average temperatures have risen dramatically in a short time period, increasing as atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> increased.

You mentioned constitutional laws and Bill of Rights. The laws of physics and chemistry unequivocally indicate the planet is warming due to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The warming is causing strange weather, which is sometimes dangerous, and always weird, giving us both too little water and too much water.

These laws also indicate CO<sub>2</sub> emitted in any year warms the planet for about 50 years. This should make you feel uneasy. With certainty, we will witness food and water shortages, refugees, wars, and new illnesses.

Environmentalists and scientists are not hysterical. We are frustrated. We know technology certainly exists to solve climate

change and power our lives, but Americans are apathetic. Your column encouraged apathy. With certainty we know apathy is one of the seven deadly sins.

I encourage you and your readers to investigate Citizens Climate Lobby, a volunteer organization lobbying for legislation to stabilize the climate, while helping members avoid feeling fragility and despair.

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