

Public must act on climate

Steve Bacher (Guest Opinion, Aug. 2) asked: "What will it take for Congress to take climate change seriously and take the steps necessary to transform our economy to one that is not dependent on fossil fuels?"

Do we need a tragedy to drag us into the battle to curtail the emissions that cause climate change? No, we don't need another disaster. Did we even heed the warnings of previous disasters made worse by climate change?

For years before Katrina, Ivor van Heerden, a hurricane expert at Louisiana State University, predicted an intense hurricane would inundate New Orleans, destroy industrial sites spreading chemicals and polluted water, create refugees and kill. Warnings weren't heeded, and Louisiana's senators and representatives remain opposed to climate legislation.

Last month, Weather Underground's Jeff Masters wrote about the growing probability that a "grey swan" hurricane could destroy Tampa. These warnings won't make Sen. Marco Rubio listen. Only public commitment can make Congress act.

Social scientists report that when roughly 10 percent of the population becomes actively committed to addressing an issue, then change will happen quickly. Readers can reduce the risk of future disasters by actively seeking congressional legislation. Push our active-on-climate roster to 10 percent.

For more information, contact Citizens' Climate Lobby.

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