

REASONS FOR THE RESIGNATION OF ROGER A. PIELKE SR. FROM THE  
CLIMATE CHANGE SCIENCE PROGRAM (CCSP) COMMITTEE

August 25, 2005

Each of the authors and the editor of the report are sincere and well qualified scientists in their specific research area. Despite this collection of expertise, however, I had to resign for the following reasons:

1. There was an inappropriate narrowing of the focus of the CCSP charge to the committee in the report;
2. The circulation of an alternative version of Chapter 6, in which I was Convening Lead Author, in order to enforce this narrow view;
3. The premature reporting of selected versions from the report to the media and policymakers prior to its actual finalization and public release.

Chapter 6 that I was lead author on was titled "What measures can be taken to improve the understanding of observed changes?" The chapter was essentially rewritten independent of me, after I had just about reached a satisfactory text with most of the committee. This new draft was circulated to the committee where it was quickly adopted by a subset of the members, the editor and the editorial staff person. The rewrite reflected a highly restricted view of the CCSP charge to the committee. I will document the CCSP charge, and its history based on panel recommendations of an October 2003 meeting in my public comment.

By seeking to limit the scope of my chapter and the report, more generally, important scientific issues were overlooked or downplayed - e.g. describing and explaining recent regional trends in surface and tropospheric temperatures. In my view, the broader perspective captured by the actual charge to the committee would better serve both science and policy.

It is highly misleading to characterize me as a climate skeptic as certain members of the media have done. I have discussed this mischaracterization on my blog (<http://climatesci.atmos.colostate.edu/>). This seems to me an effort to put my views in a convenient box. I have consistently written on the complex nature of the Earth's climate system, and the diverse types of anthropogenic climate forcings and significant human effect on climate. The climate system is complex enough to allow for a diversity of legitimate perspectives; scientific assessments should embrace and accommodate this diversity rather than impose a single perspective.