

# Opinion: Putting the climate-change debate to rest

By Eugene Robinson, Washington Post

For the clueless or cynical diehards who deny global warming, it's getting awfully cold out there.

The latest icy blast of reality comes from an eminent scientist whom the climate-change skeptics once lauded as one of their own. Richard Muller, a respected physicist at the University of California, Berkeley, used to dismiss alarmist climate research as being "polluted by political and activist frenzy." Frustrated at what he considered shoddy science, Muller launched his own comprehensive study to set the record straight. Instead, the record set him straight.

"Global warming is real," Muller wrote last week in The Wall Street Journal.

Rick Perry, Herman Cain, Michele Bachmann and the rest of the neo-Luddites who are turning the GOP into the anti-science party should pay attention.

"When we began our study, we felt that skeptics had raised legitimate issues, and we didn't know what we'd find," Muller wrote. "Our results turned out to be close to those published by prior groups. We think that means that those groups had truly been careful in their work, despite their inability to convince some skeptics of that."

In other words, the deniers' claims about the alleged sloppiness or fraudulence of climate science are wrong. Muller's team, the Berkeley Earth Surface Temperature project, rigorously explored the specific objections raised by skeptics – and found them groundless.

Muller and his fellow researchers examined an enormous data set of observed temperatures from monitoring stations around the world and concluded that the average land temperature has risen 1 degree Celsius – or about 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit – since the mid-1950s.

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