

United Nations Placing “Climate” Advisors in U.S. Governors’ Offices, Regulatory Agencies

Donor group listing mission as “to fulfill the promise of the Paris Agreement on climate change” paying for U.S. governors’, energy reg agency staff for purpose of “UN Strengthening”

Blackout risk accelerates as UN’s “Energy Transition” agenda advances

A recent *Wall Street Journal* [editorial](#), “New York’s Near Zombie Apocalypse,” highlighted the threat that ideological state energy regulators have created in the Empire State, and to the entire country’s supply of reliable electricity. [Michigan](#) is now also skating close to the line. [Other outlets—including](#) official organizations dedicated to ensuring reliability of supply—have since detailed how the main culprit behind this increasing vulnerability is the premature closure of electricity generating plants fired by coal. Now, the goal is to limit the availability of gas.

Recent documents obtained under state open records laws show that ideologically driven donors are underwriting advisors for elected officials in the U.S. to implement this agenda as ‘staff’. What began in progressive bastions has now extended even into energy state governors’ offices.

Background

Fully six years ago a *Wall Street Journal* [editorial](#) titled “Climate of Unaccountability” [revealed](#) findings [compiled](#) for the Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI) which detailed a stealth campaign by progressive donors to hire and then place a network of off-books activists as governors’ energy, environment and climate “staff”. Along with consultants and media support, the project’s [budget](#) (see p. 8) scaled up in just three years to [\\$50 million](#) for 2020.

One early participant in the plan was Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D), whose senior policy adviser for climate and sustainability, Reed Schuler, was placed in that role nominally by green-group World Resources Institute. WRI in fact played middleman in this deal for the Hewlett Foundation, which had committed *\$600 million* to climate advocacy for the period 2018 to 2023. Emails obtained from Inslee’s office flatly stated Hewlett “is paying him to work in our shop”.

The editorial quoted Inslee aides saying, without support, that such arrangements are “not unusual” and are “common across the political spectrum.” Of course, as the *Journal* noted, “Substitute the Koch brothers for the World Resources Institute, and the outrage would be predictable. This setup creates real concerns about accountability and interest-peddling. Mr. Schuler knows who pays him, and it’s not Washington taxpayers.”

Inslee staff, along with those working for the governors of California and New York, had organized a project which Hewlett ultimately financed, called the “U.S. Climate Alliance” (USCA), to place other climate ‘staff’ more broadly across the country. Hewlett gave the contract to administer the placement of such activists throughout U.S. governments to, of all entities, the United Nations Foundation.

The *Journal* editorial asked, “The implications of all this extend beyond Washington ... Where else are such special interest groups paying to influence policy?” One answer emerged later that year. A follow-up [report](#) for CEI laid out how Michael Bloomberg, with millions of dollars run through a pair of non-profits (his own, and New York University) was staffing progressive attorneys general offices to advance the same agenda, (the *WSJ* also ran an [op-ed](#) and its own unsigned editorial, “[State AGs for Rent](#)”).

Now, the threat of [winter](#) and summer blackouts is being hastened by state politicians and the regulatory agencies they direct pressing the “green” agenda further. And just as night follows day, recent public records releases from [Louisiana](#), Michigan, and New Mexico reveal that both the Bloomberg operation and Hewlett’s project, “USCA,” have metastasized into this realm.

USCA/UN

The United Nations Foundation (UNF) is “a [strategic](#) partner of the United Nations.” Its [express](#) mission of “Helping the UN build a better world” means to “connect people, ideas, and resources to the UN to deliver a better world for all.” UNF claims to be the “home” the U.S. Climate Alliance, which it lists as one of its [initiatives](#), one of its pioneer[ing] innovative public-private partnerships”, “either created or hosted by us,” which it “supports” (through “invest[ing]”) “for scaled impact” on its priorities.

UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION 25 YEARS

Search

BLOG

WHAT WE DO WHY WE DO IT

INITIATIVES

We invest early in action-oriented ideas and give them a chance to take root, thrive and scale up. We were one of the first to pioneer innovative public-private partnerships. Today we support initiatives that work with the UN and partners to achieve impact at scale on the SDGs, climate change, and major collective challenges. We are home to a series of successful organizations and initiatives, either created or hosted by us, that have their own identity but that work as part of the UN Foundation family.

WE SUPPORT PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCALED IMPACT

Learn about cross-sector expert alliances housed at the Foundation.

- ACCELERATOR for SYSTEMIC RISK ASSESSMENT
- CLEAN COOKING ALLIANCE
- data2x0 partnering for a gender data revolution
- digital impact alliance FOR A POSITIVE DIGITAL FUTURE
- FP>>2030
- Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data
- OA ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE TO COMBAT OCEAN ACIDIFICATION
- UNITED STATES CLIMATE ALLIANCE

As such, [staffing](#) up governors’ offices and regulatory agencies to impose the climate agenda is rather outside its traditional scope.

However, UNF does note that, “Sometimes we work behind-the-scenes, shaping negotiations and connecting experts, advocates, and decision-makers.”

For its part, USCA’s Governors’ Office (GO) team, including its placements and other officials, holds [bi-weekly calls](#). According to a “Stakeholder Alignment” [inventory](#) of its priorities:



UNITED STATES
**CLIMATE
ALLIANCE**

Strengthening Alignment on State and Territory Climate Priorities

Background: During the May 2023 GO teams meeting, states identified shared obstacles and strategies to better align efforts across the executive branch, state legislature, and stakeholders in advancing state climate actions.

According to this summary, under the heading Legislative and Executive Branch:

several common challenges were identified across the political spectrum:

- **Cooperation:** Legislatures might hinder progress on climate action or have other policy priorities, like economic growth or healthcare
- **Resources:** States did not have adequate staffing and financial resources to implement priority policies and programs

To get around such hurdles, this United Nations “initiative,” which provides for staff in U.S. state offices, recorded that (again, **emphases** added) “recommended actions were shared to address each challenge. This came from both brainstormed ideas, and actions that some governor's offices have already adopted in their states.

- Foster broad coalitions among stakeholders and sectors
- Utilize message framing that underscores the non-partisan nature of climate policies
- Explore external funding avenues to bolster resources
- Collaborate with legislators and stakeholders to draft bills
- Progress policies via executive orders where feasible
- Leverage partner organizations for insightful policy suggestions

Under the heading “Stakeholders and Executive Branch”:

Stakeholders and Executive Branch

A primary area of focus stemming from this discussion, especially in states with significant advocacy communities, is the lack of relationship between advocates and the executive branch. Strengthening this connection is likely a key solution to addressing challenges. The group discussed how stakeholders can successfully influence legislative climate outcomes, but often neglect advocating for the necessary levels of financial and resource support. States with strong advocacy communities often struggle to agree on approaches for climate solutions, with incremental approaches often receiving backlash from stakeholders who would rather see more comprehensive changes. This misalignment creates difficulty in coordinating a plan of action to achieve outcomes.

Under “Fostering alignment,” this initiative of the United Nations Foundation notes that:

States shared some of the practices their governor’s offices have been taking to increase alignment between stakeholders and the executive branch on the climate agenda.

- Establish regular weekly meetings and other structures for consistent communication
- Advocate for legislation that encourages robust community involvement
- Enhance task force diversity through executive appointments
- Collaborate with the environmental justice community to foster coalition among sectors and stakeholders
- Engage stakeholders in analytical discussion
- Support the expansion of research and data gathering

This ‘\$\$\$’ slide concluded a [PowerPoint](#) slide show from a quarterly meeting of a working group on cracking down on methane regulation in the United States, obtained by Power the Future:



Call for Technical Assistance

- What unmet needs do you need / anticipate needing in the next 2 years to advance methane reduction policies?
 - Staff capacity
 - Legal/technical analysis
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Pilot/demonstration projects

UNITED STATES
CLIMATE ALLIANCE

These details show how this UN “initiative” is advancing inside U.S. state governments, numerous of which participate. Tax filings indicate which states have taken UN-financed ‘staff’ in-house to do so, even cabinet-agency officials. UNF payments to staff positions in state government offices, in 2021 alone, total more than \$3.3 million in six-figure transfers to governor or agency offices in Connecticut, Colorado, Hawai’i, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Vermont and Wisconsin — alternately styled as being for “Environment” and, remarkably, “UN Strengthening”.

For example, public records reveal that in **2020** the **North Carolina Governor’s Office** accepted **\$292,677** from the United Nations Foundation and in **2021** the **Governor’s Office** accepted **\$264,765** from the UNF (reported to the IRS by UNF as being for “UN Strengthening”), the latter being part of a total of **\$725,694 in 2021**¹ and both combining to **more than one million dollars in just two years**, all to advance a UN Foundation “initiative” the USCA. In **2021** the **Wisconsin Department of Administration** accepted **\$168,132** from UNF for “UN Strengthening,” in the form of two grants (\$88,132 and \$88,000); in **2020** the **Maine Governor’s Office** accepted **\$298,600** from the UNF² and in **2021 \$519,400** (again, most of the latter reported to the IRS as being for “UN Strengthening”³), to advance the USCA agenda.

Public records also show that when an elected official accepts a position in USCA leadership, as both New Mexico Gov. Lujan Grisham and Maine Gov. Mills did in May 2023, they are bequeathed more donor funds to pay for additional ‘staff’ to support the elected official’s work advancing this UN Foundation initiative.

¹ This figure includes \$315,980 given by United Nations Foundation to fund “staff” in the state Department of Transportation and \$144,949 to do so in the state Department of Commerce, all in pursuit of the USCA initiative.

² \$165,600 to the Governor’s Energy Office, and \$33,000 to the Office of Policy Innovation.

³ \$110,400 and \$276,000 to the Governor’s Energy Office, \$133,000 to the Office of Policy Innovation.

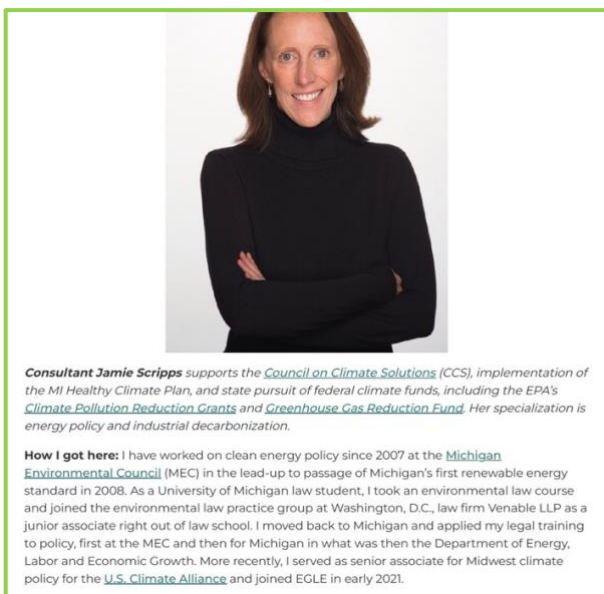
One entry paying \$173,312 is cryptically listed as being for “OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR 20320 MAIL SERVICE CENTER WASHINGTON, DC 20005. Washington, DC, of course does not have a governor, and this is to staff an unnamed governor's Washington, DC office.

Michigan FOIA Reveals Clues

Emails obtained by Government Accountability & Oversight (GAO) from the Michigan Public Service Commission left a trail of clues about outside activist groups funding numerous positions within state government, from executive agencies to at least one independent regulatory commission. Among those groups is an entity that billionaire climate activist Michael Bloomberg gave millions of dollars to create, housed at New York University, as part of his commitment of hundreds of millions of dollars to impose the “climate” agenda.

One email showed Bloomberg’s shop, working through a renewable-energy industry trade group, offering the Michigan Public Service Commission (PSC) a “[possible collaboration/partnership](#)” between the climate activists and energy regulators.⁴ Internal PSC email copying the PSC [Chairman](#) Dan Scripps referred to the overture as [presenting](#) “a potential opportunity to bring in *another fellow*” (italics added). Subsequent [emails](#) from Michigan officials revealed the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) saying “we have two fellows from USCA already actually - we're just always eager for more!”⁵

Further inquiry showed the one likely candidate, or anyway someone certainly involved with this project, on EGLE’s “[climate action](#)” web page to be Jamie (Weitzel) Scripps. Her bio says Scripps came to EGLE from the U.S. Climate Alliance (USCA) in 2021, and lists her on the staff pages as a “Consultant”. Interestingly, Scripps appears to be the [wife](#) of PSC Chairman Scripps.



⁴ Michigan suggested Bloomberg move beyond PSCs, and director Jessica Bell [agreed](#) that “fellows in other agencies could support our goals” and indicated that was in the works.

⁵ Bloomberg’s parallel project staffing up state public utility commissions is the subject of a separate discussion.

Government Accountability & Oversight obtained the details of the [contract](#) with Scripps’s LLC, Hunterston Consulting, if oddly only beginning on January 26, 2022 (not “in 2021”, leaving whatever the arrangement was at that time unresolved).

Compensation for that first year was \$96,000. At the end of 2022, an amendment wrote, “Effective December 1, 2022, this Contract is exercising two of the three option years available and is increased by \$4,000. The revised contract expiration date is January 25, 2025. All other terms, conditions, specifications and pricing remain the same.”

A year later, Ms. Scripps’s consultation compensation increased by 45%:

CURRENT VALUE	VALUE OF CHANGE NOTICE	ESTIMATED AGGREGATE CONTRACT VALUE
\$100,000.00	\$145,000.00	\$245,000.00
DESCRIPTION: Effective January 18, 2023, this Contract is increased by \$145,000.00. All other terms, conditions, specifications and pricing remain the same.		

Key provisions of Scripps’s contract, and also purchase [order](#), include:

**Council on Climate Solutions Support
Contract# 220000000433**

BACKGROUND
The Council on Climate Solutions was created by Governor Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-182 as an advisory body in the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). The Council on Climate Solutions will act in an advisory capacity to the governor and the department in formulating and overseeing the implementation of the MI Healthy Climate Plan, which will serve as the action plan for this state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition toward economywide carbon neutrality.

SCOPE
As part of this Contract, the Contractor will provide a variety of services to further the Council on Climate Solutions (CCS). The Contractor will work alongside EGLE to support the work of various councils and task forces in Michigan, including research, development, and drafting of council reports.

The Contractor will provide support for management of USCA-funded staff.

The purchase order states clearly that Scripps is being paid [to](#) “provide support for existing engagement with the U.S. Climate Alliance (USCA)” and “provide support for management of USCA-funded staff” [sic]. This agreement ran from July 2021 through August 2023, and was extended by an [amendment](#) through August 2024 on September 5, 2023.

It appears that Michigan went to greater lengths to avoid the optics of UN financing of its staff, while only managing to obscure that fact. The [Memorandum](#) of Understanding between EGLE’s Office of Climate and Energy (OCE) and the University of Michigan “to provide funding for climate leadership staff,” states the following (notice only state or federal are listed as sources):

Project Name: Climate Leadership Staff		
Amount of Funding: \$120,000	Match: \$451,000	Total: \$571,000
Funding Source(s): State <input type="checkbox"/>	Federal <input type="checkbox"/>	Both State and Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE:
 Michigan's OCE will partner with U of M (hereafter referred to as "the Parties") to use the United States Climate Alliance's (USCA) Climate Leadership Grant to hire staff to support planning and engagement with the Council on Climate Solutions (Council), policy evaluation, and development of the MI Healthy Climate Plan (Plan).

The OCE will use the USCA Climate Leadership Grant to hire two full-time staff members (hereafter referred to as "Seconded") to support its engagement with the Council, its development of the Plan, and its aggregation and analysis of data related to Michigan's progress toward meeting its MI Healthy Climate goals.

The Seconded would be hired by U of M via a secondment and located in Michigan's OCE, which was created by Governor Gretchen Whitmer in 2019 to advance climate action, coordinate climate work across state agencies, and advance renewable energy.

Tax records show the \$451,000 routed through the University came from the UNF.

Translated, the United Nations Foundation project USCA is paying to staff and executive Gov. Whitmer's Council on Climate Solutions, but will technically "house" them within the University, with which EGLE's Office of Climate and Energy partners for this purpose.⁶

New Mexico Records Show Much More Detail

Power the Future has obtained a copy of the [contract](#) the UN's non-profit arm is using to staff up U.S. domestic political offices, specifically to deploy "Inflation Reduction Act" billions from the taxpayer to rapidly impose "climate" policies. The latest transfer appears to be of \$307,300 to the New Mexico Department of Energy Minerals and Natural Resources, to underwrite an energy state governor, Michelle Lujan Grisham, campaign to impose the UN's desired policies. In and of which the Lujan administrator and its officials are [fully involved](#) and [strong advocates](#).

UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION, INC. GRANT AGREEMENT

Grantee:	New Mexico Department of Energy, Minerals, and Resources
Grant Name:	Climate Leadership Program Grant for New Mexico Governor's Office
Grant Number:	G-18116
Grant Amount:	USD \$307,300.00
Date:	June 28, 2023

1. This grant to New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (the "Grantee") will support the specific charitable purposes set forth in the written proposal, attached hereto as **Exhibit A** (the "Project").

⁶ Despite acknowledging here that the state is spending a "USCA Climate Leadership grant to hire staff", the MOU proceeds to muddy things somewhat with the following, the meaning of which is not yet clear to the authors:

SOURCE OF FUNDING AND FUNDING LIMITATIONS:

The source of the funding for this project is through the federal State Energy Program's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, and this MOU is being administered by the Materials Management Division (MMD). The federal grant funding number is EE0008653. The program title is State Energy Program of the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA), and the CFDA number is 81.041.

[Conditions](#) in this [latest](#) in a years-long collaboration include, “UNF may monitor and conduct formal evaluations of operations under this Agreement, which may include a visit from UNF personnel or other representatives, including representatives from The U.S. Climate Alliance, to observe Grantee’s projects,” and scheduled “Reporting Requirements” to “be used by UNF staff to evaluate and provide an overview of your work to our funders”.

<p>EXHIBIT B</p> <p>REPORTING REQUIREMENTS</p> <p>UNF requires for our records an interim and final report on the schedule specified in Section 12 of the Agreement. Each report must: i) describe in narrative fashion what was achieved with the grant funds; and ii) provide a full financial accounting of the grant funds.</p> <p>I. Narrative Report</p> <p>Each narrative report must, in five (5) pages or less, summarize how the grant funds were used and the results that were achieved. The report will be used by UNF staff to evaluate and provide an overview of your work to our funders. Please address the following topics in your report:</p>	<p>Jessica Pressler-Shepherd Deleted: EMNRD No. 24-521-0100-0024</p> <p>Zendel, Denise, EMNRD Formatted: Right</p> <p>Zendel, Denise, EMNRD Formatted: Font: Not Italic</p> <p>Jessica Pressler-Shepherd Deleted: 1</p>
---	---

This [\\$307,300.00 in June 2023](#) may be at least in part to pay for additional ‘staff’ bequeathed Gov. Lujan Grisham to support her work for this UN Foundation initiative after [assuming](#) a position in USCA leadership in May 2023.

September 25, 2023 at 10:38 AM Details

Borchert, Claudia, ENV
 RE: [EXTERNAL] Tomorrow's Buildings Announcement + Key IRA Updates
 To: Weller, AnnaLinden, EMNRD, Finkelstein, Rachel, EMNRD, Cc: Lienemann, Sydney, ENV, Miano, Michelle, ENV

Sounds great, thank you!

From: Weller, AnnaLinden, EMNRD <AnnaLinden.Weller@emnrn.nm.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2023 8:29 AM
To: Borchert, Claudia, ENV <Claudia.Borchert@env.nm.gov>; Finkelstein, Rachel, EMNRD <Rachel.Finkelstein@emnrn.nm.gov>
Cc: Lienemann, Sydney, ENV <sydney.lienemann@env.nm.gov>; Miano, Michelle, ENV <michelle.miano@env.nm.gov>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Tomorrow's Buildings Announcement + Key IRA Updates

Hi Claudia,

As I said to Michelle, I will be there on behalf of EMNRD, and I'm glad to have Deputy Secretary Lienemann with me! As for the USCA position, I believe it is nearly ready to be advertised. However, I will check with Deputy Secretary Leahy and make sure my information is correct.

Best,
AnnaLinden

From: Borchert, Claudia, ENV <Claudia.Borchert@env.nm.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2023 8:13 AM
To: Weller, AnnaLinden, EMNRD <AnnaLinden.Weller@emnrn.nm.gov>; Finkelstein, Rachel, EMNRD <Rachel.Finkelstein@emnrn.nm.gov>
Cc: Lienemann, Sydney, ENV <sydney.lienemann@env.nm.gov>; Miano, Michelle, ENV <michelle.miano@env.nm.gov>
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Tomorrow's Buildings Announcement + Key IRA Updates

Hi CCTF co leads

Deputy Secretary Sydney Lienemann is planning on going to the USCA semiannual meeting in Seattle in October. Do you have an update on [the USCA position that will support the GO in the Governor's new leadership role in the USCA?](#)

Thanks,
Claudia

That amount is clearly an addition to what UNF was already doing to pay New Mexico “climate” officials’ salaries. A [May 2023 grant of \\$197,200.00](#)—making that year’s total support of more than a half a million dollars of UN Foundation underwriting for the climate agenda just in New Mexico—was itself was an extension of a 2020 agreement.

UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION
GRANT AGREEMENT – AMENDMENT NO. 2

Grantee: State of New Mexico
Grant Name: New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department
Climate Leadership Grant
Grant Number: G-17888-2 / UNF-20-1146
Grant Amount: US \$192,200.00
Date: May 24, 2023

THIS AMENDMENT NO. 2 (the “Amendment”) is entered into between the State of New Mexico, 1220 South St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505 (the “Grantee”) and the United Nations Foundation, Inc., 1750 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C., 20006 (“UNF”), and serves to modify the Grant Agreement entered into by the Parties on April 17, 2020, and subsequently amended on November 24, 2020 (collectively, the “Agreement”).

Emails indicate this is a contract extension for Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) Secretary Sarah Cottrell Propst, which NM described as not reflecting any cost but just an extension of an extant grant’s time.

EMNRD No. 20-521-0300-0300-02
United Nations Foundation

- \$96,100.00 upon execution of the original Agreement as payment for the period of October 1, 2020 through April 30, 2021; and
- \$96,100.00 upon satisfactory progress as reported in the Interim Report for the period of May 1, 2021 through September 30, 2023.

All other conditions not hereby amended are to remain in full force and effect.


IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have caused this Agreement to be executed by their respective duly authorized representatives on the dates indicated below.

Agreed & Accepted:

For the United Nations Foundation, Inc.:

For the State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources
Department:

Date: _____
Name: Lia Fordjour
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 
Name: Sarah Cottrell Propst
Title: Cabinet Secretary
Tax ID: 85-6000565

The Governor issued a [statement](#) when Propst finally departed, which made no mention of the UN’s role in her employment, but that she “played a crucial role in advancing the state’s environmental, energy and economic goals” and was “a driving force behind New Mexico’s expanding clean energy economy.”

Conclusion

On its face, these arrangements appear to be inconsistent with the basic tenets of state codes of government ethics. Obvious questions for legislative oversight committees include, *is this permissible?* That is, is it permissible if, e.g., a utility industry group or a pro-fossil fuel group staffs a commissioner's office? *If so, what should the legislature, and the Commission, do to prohibit the continuance and spread of this practice?* *If not permissible, what are the appropriate remedies?* It appears that legislators and Commission members seeking opinions from the appropriate ethics body is the proper first step to answering these questions and addressing the outside financing of 'staff' to rapidly implement a controversial agenda posing a growing threat to our energy, economic and thus national security.