



Institute for
Policy Integrity
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STATEMENT ON LOUISIANA SOCIAL COST OF CARBON RULING

Today, the District Court for the Western District of Louisiana [issued](#) a preliminary injunction that restrains federal agencies from relying on the federal government’s social cost of greenhouse gas metrics. Developed by leading scientists and economists, these metrics provide a lower bound for the social costs of climate pollution and play a critical role in evaluating agency policies.

Max Sarinsky, Senior Attorney at the Institute for Policy Integrity at NYU School of Law, issued the following statement:

“Today’s ruling restricts federal agencies from considering scientific estimates of total climate change impacts. These estimates were developed a dozen years ago by experts throughout the federal government and drew heavily from the work of a Nobel laureate. So long as the ruling stands, it will complicate the government’s good-faith efforts to compare the costs and benefits of policy choices.

The ruling upsets several settled, bipartisan principles of administrative law. To confer standing, it relies on wildly speculative claims about future injuries. The ruling characterizes scientific damage assessments—which are used as an analytical tool—as a binding rule. And it concludes that this “rule” is ripe for judicial review. Pointing to these problems, a federal court in Missouri dismissed an almost identical lawsuit last year.

Today’s ruling will likely receive very close scrutiny upon appeal.

Sarinsky is available for interviews on this issue.

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[The Institute for Policy Integrity](#) at New York University School of Law is a non-partisan think tank dedicated to improving the quality of government decisionmaking. The institute produces original scholarly research in the fields of economics, law, and regulatory policy; and advocates for reform before courts, legislatures, and executive agencies.