

No more fretting over climate; U.S. Navy puts focus back on fighting

The U.S. Navy officially scrapped a Biden-era “climate action” plan for the force on Tuesday, signifying the Trump administration’s ongoing efforts to refocus the military towards warfighting.

“Today, I’m focusing on the warfighters first, and I’m rescinding the Biden administration’s climate action program. Our focus needs to be on lethality and our warfighters,” Navy Secretary John Phelan announced in a video message.

Released in May 2022, the Climate Action 2030 program contained a series of actions and goals the Department of the Navy (DON) has taken or planned to undertake to tackle what Biden Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro characterized as the “urgency of the climate crisis.” In the document’s opening foreword, Del Toro claimed the Navy and Marine Corps “are in the crosshairs of the climate crisis,” and that “[c]limate change is one of the most destabilizing forces of our time, exacerbating other national security concerns and posing serious readiness challenges.”

The action plan identified two “performance goals,” one of which included the DON’s stated aim of reducing “greenhouse gas emissions and draw[ing] greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere to stabilize ecosystems, and achieve, as an enterprise, [President Biden’s] commitment to net-zero emissions by 2050, as well as other targets.”

In order to achieve these objectives and comply with a 2021 climate-related executive order by Biden, the DON laid out a series of targets for the branch to work towards in the years ahead.

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SHAWN FLEETWOOD – THE FEDERALIST

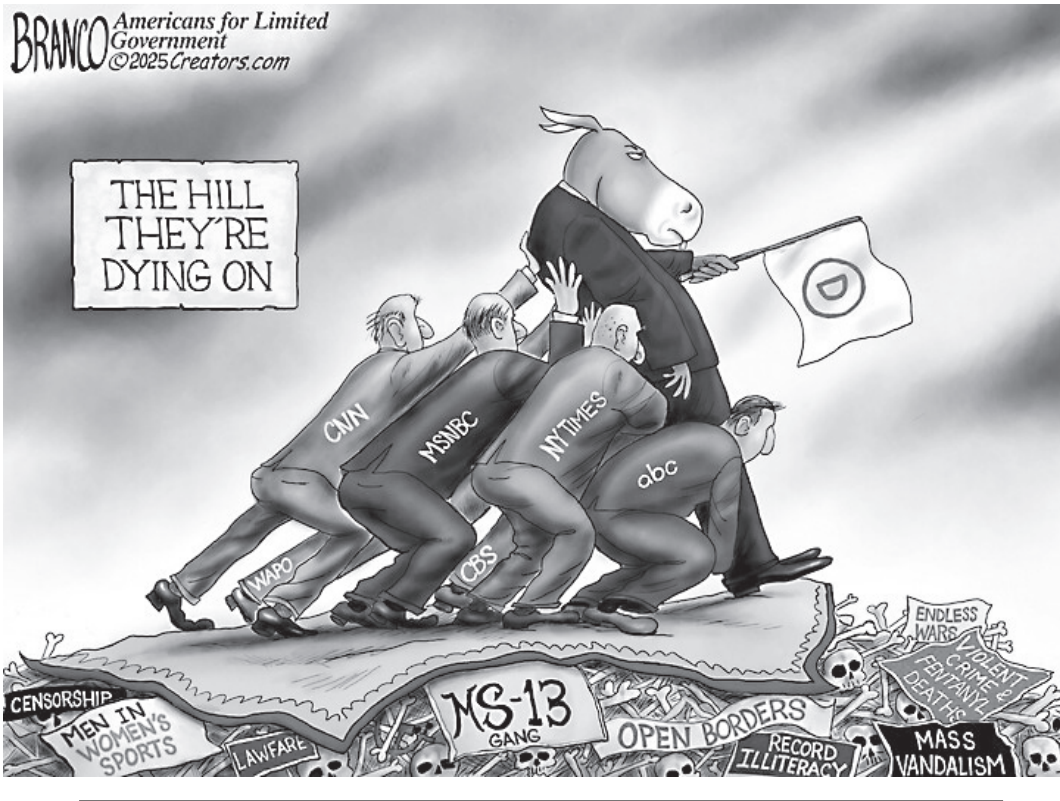
This included commitments to “[a]cquiring 100 percent zero-emission vehicles by 2035, including 100 percent zero-emission light-duty vehicle acquisitions by 2027” and “[a]chieving a 50 percent reduction in emissions from buildings by 2032.”

“There is no time to waste. Climate change is already impacting our Department, our Nation, and the world in significant ways, and the threat will only intensify in the coming decades,” the Climate Action 2030 plan reads. “The DON has made meaningful progress, and now the magnitude and urgency of the climate crisis demand that the Department accelerate our efforts, work together, and think creatively to arrive at new and expanded solutions.”

The now-rescinded program was but one of several efforts by the Biden administration to integrate leftists’ climate alarmist agenda into military operations.

In May 2021, for example, the U.S. Army announced it would begin prioritizing so-called “climate change threats” as part of its strategic planning operations and threat analysis. Similar to the Navy’s climate plan, the Army’s memo classified “climate change” as “a serious threat to U.S. National security interests and defense objectives.”

– *Shawn Fleetwood is a staff writer for The Federalist and a graduate of the University of Mary Washington. Follow him on Twitter @ShawnFleetwood*



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Unbelievable. Unbelievable. The Democrats who won’t stand and applaud at the joint session of Congress in tribute to the family of Lakin Riley, the college student who was raped and killed by an illegal immigrant, that same Democrat party will send a senator to El Salvador to try to win the freedom of an MS-13 gang member in the United States illegally. Unbelievable, just unbelievable.

Why are we fighting against each other? Why do Americans hate each other? Maybe the vote was not who you wanted to win, but we’re still Americans. We live in a free country. We live in a country of opportunity. We have to just get

ourselves out there and get involved in the opportunity. We don’t have to hate one another over this.

There are so many families and friends that have divided because of this election. We have got to stop this. This isn’t what’s supposed to happen in America and God sure as heck isn’t liking it. We need to use some common sense, like our parents did, like our grandparents did. They didn’t fight wars and they didn’t sacrifice not having the best lives all the time to make us sit here and fight with one another. I think we all need to take a dose of grown-up.

As I was leaving my house on my lawnmower with a flat tire ready to come off the rim and a good mile from the downtown tire shop, I passed by a nice man walking his dogs. As he shook his head he said, “do you really think you can make it to the tire shop?” On a wing and a prayer I said. Thirty minutes later as I am leaving the tire shop and there the nice man was at the stop sign! I just smiled and gave him a thumbs up as he shook his head! It is great to live in a small town where people do care. Thank you!

How come the postal service in Garnett hires two carriers from Ottawa to come down here to carry mail when we got two here that can carry mail as well as they can but they send them out of town? I think somebody needs to be using some common sense and maybe get DOGE down here and take a look at the postal service.

Now we’re going through another pandemic. In my age I had measles and I had rubella which is part of the measles. I had to stay in a dark room with sunglasses on for two weeks when I had rubella. And I’m very concerned that this pandemic is killing little kids.

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The hidden threat to care for the Down syndrome community

When my son was born with Down syndrome, I learned quickly that the smallest details of medical care can have an extensive effect on the quality of life.

Clinicians who understood Down syndrome, insurance coverage policies that took my son’s unique health profile into account, and even the bedside manner of the health professionals caring for my son had a tremendous effect on our experience with the healthcare system. Today, as a leader of a national advocacy organization, I’m watching a seemingly minor legal provision put new treatments out of reach for children like mine.

Here’s the issue from the perspective of a mother and a healthcare advocate.

The largely well-intended Inflation Reduction Act passed in 2022 imposes price caps on an expanding roster of drugs. However, before these price controls kick in, new medicines get a “grace period” that gives developers time to earn a return on their investments and further incentivize the drug development children need.

The IRA sets different grace period lengths for two broad categories of drugs. Biologics, which are administered by injection or infusion in a clinical setting, get a 13-year exemption.

Small-molecule drugs, usually taken at home in pill form, get a nine-year break.

Now, facing shorter timelines to recoup investments in small-molecule drugs, the pharmaceutical industry is shifting resources toward the

...I’m watching a seemingly minor legal provision put new treatments out of reach for children like mine.

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KANDI PICKARD – NAT. DOWN SYNDROME SOCIETY

development of biologics, which are more invasive to administer and must be done in a clinical setting. Over the next 20 years, it is estimated that this will result in 188 fewer small-molecule treatments reaching patients.

This is troublesome for the Down syndrome community, as small-molecule research is advancing some of the treatments we need most. I can’t help but wonder if one of those 188 small-molecule treatments could be one that would prevent the onset of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia for my son.

Small-molecule drugs represent one possible treatment option that could greatly affect these patients. Unlike biologics, these medications can cross the blood-brain barrier, targeting the root

causes of dementia. Clinical trials of small-molecule drugs to prevent cognitive decline have been encouraging and have brought hope to a community that desperately needs it. Just as the research is showing promise, the IRA threatens to deter investment by penalizing small-molecule drug development as a result of the shorter grace period.

The reality is that small-molecule drugs make life easier for everyone -- not just individuals with Down syndrome. Without the cost and inconvenience of travel, patients can maintain daily activities.

Thankfully, lawmakers have proposed a solution to the IRA’s “pill penalty.” The bipartisan EPIC Act -- short for Ensuring Pathways to Innovative Cures -- was reintroduced earlier this year. The bill would eliminate the discriminatory treatment of small-molecule drugs by creating parity between pricing schemes.

The Down syndrome community has made remarkable progress in recent decades. Each step forward came through hard-fought battles for access to innovative, life-saving medical innovations, thereby increasing the quality of care. This misguided policy threatens to reverse this progress by reshaping research incentives away from the treatments patients need and may prefer.

Passing the EPIC Act would give people renewed hope to live long and healthy lives.

Kandi Pickard is the President and CEO of the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS). This column originally appeared at DC Journal.

How Kilmar Abrego Garcia played the U.S. immigration system

Kilmar Abrego Garcia shouldn’t be in a prison in El Salvador, but he also never should have been in the United States or given relief from deportation.

The White House is trying to make the alleged MS-13 gang member a symbol of illegal-immigrant crime, while Trump’s opposition is seeking to make “the Maryland man” a symbol of the administration’s disregard for due process.

What has gotten less attention is that his case is an example of the self-defeating absurdities of our immigration system and, in particular, of how it hands out “humanitarian protection.”

When Abrego Garcia avoided deportation back in 2019, he didn’t take advantage of asylum — which has been a key driver of the immigration crisis — but something called “withholding of removal.”

Whereas a grant of asylum greases the path to U.S. citizenship, a withholding of removal just prevents a deportable alien from being removed to a particular country — in Abrego Garcia’s case, El Salvador.

Abrego Garcia was born in 1995 in El Salvador and came to the United States in 2012, when he was 16 years old. He lived here illegally until he was picked up by the police in 2019 and put into deportation proceedings. To avoid being removed, Abrego Garcia made an asylum claim, sought relief under the U.N. Convention against Torture, and applied for a withholding of removal.

An immigration judge didn’t grant him asylum (he hadn’t applied, as required, within his first year of coming here) and ruled that Abrego Garcia hadn’t established that he’d be tortured upon return to El Salvador. The judge did, however, grant the withholding of removal, on

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RICH LOWRY, King Features Syndicate

unconvincing grounds.

Abrego Garcia claimed that his mother had run a pupusa business — a national dish in El Salvador — out of the family’s home, and that a gang, Barrio 18, had begun extorting and threatening the family. This included a warning that it would take Kilmar, then around twelve years old, if the payments didn’t continue. Assuming that this is true, it’s awful, but it wasn’t a good reason to prohibit Abrego Garcia from being removed to El Salvador years later.

At the time of the court proceeding, things had changed. The pupusa business had closed, so the occasion for extortion by the Barrio 18 gang no longer existed. And Abrego Garcia wasn’t a kid anymore; he was a 23-year-old capable of living independently of his family.

To succeed in getting a withholding of removal, an alien is supposed to establish a risk of persecution based on his race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group,

or political opinion.

How did this apply to Abrego Garcia? Supposedly his family was the “particular social group.” This is a stretch, since the gang presumably would have treated anyone with a pupusa business the same way. The family wasn’t the victim of persecution, as commonly understood, but of a cowardly act by despicable gangsters.

Someone petitioning for a withholding also needs to show that he can’t relocate somewhere else in his country of origin and avoid the potential harm. It’s hard to believe that Barrio 18 would have hunted Abrego Garcia down wherever he lived in El Salvador to harass him over a former San Salvador pupusa business.

Then, there’s the fact that El Salvador’s President Nayib Bukele has utterly demolished Barrio 18.

So, here we had a man, Kilmar Abrego Garcia, who came here illegally and had, at best, questionable associations, living and working in the United States based on a supposed fear of an all but extinct street gang and its depredations over a long-closed pupusa business. And we wonder why we can’t control illegal immigration?

Congress should eliminate the “particular social group” category, which is often abused, and we should fundamentally rethink how humanitarian protection works, and even if it makes sense to be in the business of granting asylum at all.

The Trump administration shouldn’t have blown by the immigration judge’s 2019 ruling in Abrego Garcia’s case, but this is no way to run an immigration system.

– *Rich Lowry is editor of The National Review*

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