

Open letter to the international community and parties to the Paris Agreement from U.S. state, local, higher education, and business leaders:

We, the undersigned mayors, governors, college and university leaders and businesses are joining forces for the first time to declare, that we will continue to support climate action to meet the Paris Agreement.

In December 2015 in Paris, world leaders signed the first global commitment to fight climate change. The landmark agreement succeeded where past attempts failed because it allowed each country to set its own emission reduction targets and adopt its own strategies for reaching them.

In addition, nations – inspired by the actions of local and regional governments, along with businesses – came to recognize that fighting climate change brings significant economic and public health benefits.

The Trump administration's announcement undermines a key pillar in the fight against climate change and damages the world's ability to avoid the most dangerous and costly effects of climate change. Importantly, it is also out of step with what is happening in the United States.

In the U.S., it is local and state governments, along with businesses, that are primarily responsible for the dramatic decrease in greenhouse gas emissions in recent years. Actions by each group will multiply and accelerate in the years ahead, no matter what policies Washington may adopt.

In the absence of leadership from Washington, states, cities, colleges and universities and businesses representing a sizeable percentage of the U.S. economy will pursue ambitious climate goals, working together to take forceful action and to ensure that the U.S. remains a global leader in reducing emissions.

It is imperative that the world know that in the U.S., the actors that will provide the leadership necessary to meet our Paris commitment are found in city halls, state capitals, colleges and universities and businesses. Together, we will remain actively engaged with the international community as part of the global effort to hold warming to under 2°C and to accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy that will benefit our security, prosperity, and health.