



Stop the Coup 2025
a public education and mobilization campaign

Chapter 13. Environmental Protection Agency. Author:

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In a conservative administration, the EPA would move regulatory efforts to the states and localities, who would lead with federal support, rather than the other way around. Gunasekara argues that this is consistent with the “concept of cooperative federalism” and would promote a “culture of compliance” rather than enforcement. Under conservatives, there would be transparency and accurate measures of progress.

Gunasekara suggests that there is currently skepticism about the EPA, which she attributes to the agency having been “coopted by the Left for political ends.” She argues that under Obama and Biden, it has been top-down and coercive, especially in relation to fossil fuels and pesticide use in agriculture. This has produced costly regulations that push industry overseas rather than solving environmental problems.

The EPA Administrator has been sidelined by Biden’s “climate czar,” and EPA activists have found ways to ignore the will of Congress. Biden uses scare tactics to misrepresent the state of the environment and the effect of climate change, and offers Americans a false choice; the conservative position rebuts this and suggests that there can in fact be both a strong economy and a healthy environment. EPA advisory committees have a lot of influence over policy “and their membership has too often been handpicked to achieve certain political positions. In the Biden Administration, key EPA advisory committees were purged of balanced perspectives, geographic diversity, important regulatory and private-sector experience, and state, local, and tribal expertise.”

The EPA was created in 1970 to deal with pollution remaining from the past. Gunasekara argues that under President Obama, and now under President Biden, it was expanded to include far-reaching political goals.

Under a conservative president, the agency would be reshaped to fulfill the following overarching goals:

- ✓ Leadership by states, not federal government
- ✓ Accountability for progress
- ✓ An emphasis on recognizing the social and economic effects of EPA regulations on communities
- ✓ Encouragement of cooperative compliance, not coercion
- ✓ Requirement for transparent science, and diversity of scientific opinion



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Under this plan, the EPA would undergo extensive reorganization that would begin with an Executive Order on Day One, and call for a review of the EPA's function. A team of political appointees would be ready to immediately step into positions across the entire agency.

The conservative position makes three main claims:

1. Democratic presidents have politicized the agency and over-expanded its mandate to cover issues such as Environmental Justice. Thus, in terms of structural reorganization, the agency would first move the Offices of Justice, Enforcement, Public Engagement, and Children's Health elsewhere, into other agencies.
2. The EPA relies on outdated and incomplete science. This would be countered by placing political appointees in to run the EPA's research and science activities. (For example, Gunasekara argues that the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP) "is constantly pressured to ban the use of certain chemicals, typically based on fear as a result of mischaracterized or incomplete science." She adds, "EPA's scientific enterprise [...] has rightly been criticized for decades as precautionary, bloated, unaccountable, closed, outcome-driven, hostile to public and legislative input, and inclined to pursue political rather than purely scientific goals.")

The science of climate change is an important element of this section, and Gunasekara argues that a high priority should be the repeal or reform of "outdated environmental statutes" such as the Global Change Research Act of 1990 [15 U.S. Code Chapter 56A, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/15/chapter-56A>], which states: "Industrial, agricultural, and other human activities, coupled with an expanding world population, are contributing to processes of global change that may significantly alter the Earth habitat within a few human generations."

3. The EPA is bloated and inefficient, and over-regulates, sometimes infringing on private property rights and placing unnecessary burdens on business and industry. Regulation should be eased to encourage economic development.

The chapter lists extremely detailed specifics of regulations, legislation, court cases, and executive orders that would need to be replaced, modified, or repealed to achieve stated goals.

STC 2025 Commentary: Chapter 13 recapitulates familiar conservative arguments about the need for American energy dominance, which they argue requires more reliance on fossil fuels. The other familiar argument is the call to loosen regulations and enforcement to allow business and industry more latitude and less concern about environmental effects. In this worldview, economics are always more important than environmental or climate change issues. In fact, Gunasekara does not agree that climate change is caused by human activity.

Chapter 13 - Key Points:

- ✓ Dismantle all attempts to address climate change, and challenge the accepted scientific position on the effect of human activities on the climate
- ✓ Leadership by states, not federal government



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- ✓ Loosen regulations if they get in the way of business
- ✓ Reduce enforcement of existing regulations