

National Academies of Sciences says no to demands it remove climate info

The attorneys general requested a response by March 2, one that addresses a set of leading questions, such as, “Why did the National Academies include a chapter on climate science that is not based on balanced or sound science?” and “What procedures will the National Academies establish to prevent similar advocacy-based chapters in future editions?” Since then, Ars has been contacting both the NAS and the Montana attorney general’s office (which published the letter) to try to find out whether a response was provided.

We finally learned yesterday that the response had been issued two days ahead of the deadline (it’s the final page of this PDF). Weighing in at just two sentences, the NAS says it used the same procedures to generate the climate chapter as it did for every other chapter, procedures that had been developed jointly with the Federal Judicial Center. “The manual, including the chapter on climate science, will continue to be available on the Academy’s website,” the response concludes.

The response leaves no obvious next step for the attorneys general. Their letter notes that the NAS is heavily dependent upon funding from the federal government to prepare its expert reports, and so producing reports that displease Republicans could be risky, but they have no ability to directly influence that funding.

Meanwhile, the political interference with the report drew a second response, this coming from many of the authors of the other chapters of the Reference Manual, who published an open

letter decrying the political interference. In addition to noting the value of the Reference Manual and the rigorous peer review all chapters go through, the authors highlight the dangers posed by the actions of the attorneys general:

If political actors can determine which fields of established science are disfavored and off-limits to judicial education, every scientific discipline relevant to complex litigation becomes vulnerable to the same tactic. The integrity of the process by which judges evaluate scientific evidence should not be subject to political interference or veto.

The real danger is long term. If chapters continue to get deleted any time they run afoul of the current political winds, then it will become increasingly challenging to get the best scientists and legal scholars to contribute to the manual or its peer review. Over time, the quality of the material will decay, leaving judges less well-prepared to face cases with a heavy scientific component. Society as a whole will end up the loser.

<https://arstechnica.com/science/2026/03/national-academies-of-sciences-resisting-pressure-to-pull-climate-info/>