

US panel votes to bar climate funding

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On a party line vote, the Republican-led House Foreign Affairs Committee voted to ban [funding](#) in next year's budget for Obama's initiative to support poor nations in adapting to climate change or pursuing clean energy.

But the measure's future is uncertain as other committees also have jurisdiction over climate funding including in the Senate, where Obama's Democratic Party is in control.

Representative Connie Mack, a Republican from Florida, said he proposed the funding cut as "we have to prioritize US tax dollars." Jean Schmidt, a Republican from Ohio, questioned if human activity was causing climate change.

Democrats attacked the move. Representative Howard Berman, the top Democrat on the committee, said it would cut off funding for vulnerable populations that are already feeling the [effects of climate change](#).

Gerry Connolly, a Democrat from Virginia, likened the Republican effort to the 1925 Scopes monkey trial in which a Tennessee teacher was taken to court for teaching evolution.

Obama requested some \$1.3 billion in the fiscal year starting in October for his [Global Climate Change](#) Initiative, according to the non-partisan Congressional Research Service.

The funding would include assistance to the poorest nations including small islands feeling the brunt of climate change, as well as efforts to encourage clean energy and to reduce deforestation.

Around half of the funding falls under the Treasury Department, whose budget is under the purview of another House committee.

UN-led talks in December in Cancun, Mexico, agreed to set up a Green Climate Fund to help the poorest countries combat [climate change](#), with wealthy nations contributing \$100 billion each year starting in 2020.

The developed world has also promised some \$30 billion between 2010 and 2012 in so-called "fast-track" assistance -- seen as a key part of sealing a future global deal on curbing carbon emissions.

Japan has pledged \$15 billion, or about half, of the fast-track funding

and European Union members have promised \$10.3 billion (7.2 billion euros). The United States budgeted \$1.7 billion in the 2010 fiscal year.

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