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Rep. Frank Lucas Acts to Oppose EPA Rules on Gases

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By Chris Casteel

Rep. Frank Lucas joined Republican leaders Tuesday in an effort to block the Environmental Protection Agency from regulating greenhouse gas emissions.

Lucas, R-Cheyenne, said the EPA's plan to use the Clean Air Act to regulate carbon emissions is "just an underhanded way of imposing cap and tax regulations on the American people."

Lucas, the top Republican on the House Agriculture Committee, said the GOP resolution he is co-sponsoring "would block the agency from imposing terrifying standards that would cripple American agriculture and stifle economic growth in this country."

The U.S. Supreme Court gave the EPA the authority to regulate carbon dioxide emissions under the Clean Air Act, and the agency took the first step to doing so last year, finding that the emissions endanger public health and welfare because of their connection to climate change.

The EPA has not taken major action yet to regulate emissions since lawmakers in Congress have been working on legislation intended to curb greenhouse gas emissions. Inhofe challenge

EPA administrator Lisa Jackson clashed with Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Tulsa, over the agency's endangerment finding. Inhofe said the finding was based on a flawed report on climate change, but Jackson said there is no question human activity is causing climate change.

House Republican leader John Boehner of Ohio, who is leading the House effort to block EPA action, said Tuesday the regulations would be a "back-door national energy tax" that would "hit every middle-class American family and small business owner when they drive a car, flip on a light switch or buy any product made in the United States."

A resolution similar to the one sponsored by House Republicans has been introduced in the Senate by Alaska Republican Lisa Murkowski.

Nearly 600 scientists sent a letter to Congress on Monday opposing efforts, mostly by Republicans, to block the EPA action.

"The EPA's endangerment finding is based on an exhaustive review of the massive body of scientific research showing a clear threat from climate change," the letter states.

Blocking the EPA finding that is "based on solid science," the letter states, would be rejecting that science.