

**Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman  
Co-Chair, Bicameral Task Force of Climate Change  
Roundtable on Climate Change Impacts  
January 14, 2014**

Senator Whitehouse and I are pleased to welcome you to this forum on the impacts of climate change, sponsored by the Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change.

I thank all of the panelists for being here. Your voices and your stories are ones that Congress urgently needs to hear. You should also know that this forum is being recorded so that members of Congress and the public who can't be with us today can view it online.

The world's leading scientists agree: climate change is occurring, is primarily caused by human activities, and threatens the world we live in. Your experiences on the coast of Alaska confirm what scientists are telling us -- that we are already feeling the impacts of our changing climate.

Melting sea ice and permafrost ... extreme coastal erosion ... these are not theoretical threats to someone in the distant future. Your village is facing those damaging impacts of climate change today.

Unfortunately, many members of Congress continue to deny that climate change is happening. In fact, in about an hour, the Energy and Commerce Committee will be considering a Republican bill that would eliminate the Environmental Protection Agency's existing authority to address carbon pollution from coal-fired power plants. At a time when we urgently need to move forward with real solutions, House Republicans want to bury their heads in the sand and block progress.

That's why we are so pleased you are here today. You are on the front line of climate change impacts. You understand that unchecked climate change does have consequences. Congress needs to hear you describe how a rapidly changing climate is exacting a tremendous toll on our coastal communities.

I look forward to hearing your testimony today and learning from you. Before we turn to the panelists, I would like to recognize my colleague Senator Whitehouse for his opening remarks.