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# Economic Thought and U.S. Climate Change Policy

edited by David M. Driesen

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## Preface

This book grew from the work of the Center for Progressive Reform (CPR), a virtual think tank at the forefront of developing ideas to further environmental safety. CPR's leadership asked me to formulate a plan for the organization's climate change work. It seemed that an organization of scholars should address the role of ideas in climate change. And ideas, particularly the idea that government should regulate markets either not at all or very reluctantly, have played a large and often underappreciated role in U.S. climate change policy. But we wanted to do more than pinpoint the role of neoliberalism, the cultural veneration of free markets, in climate change policy's failure; we wanted to develop ideas that would provide a better, more appropriate framework for addressing climate change and other environmental ills.

This book, then, stemmed from my proposal to address economic thought's role in climate change policy in a critical, yet constructive, way, and it came to fruition thanks to the willingness of CPR Member Scholars to contribute to and shape these pages. They worked diligently at developing and expanding the ideas at the heart of this project.

Robert Glicksman, a CPR scholar from George Washington University and a contributor to two chapters in this book, deserves special mention in this regard. He not only wrote key pieces, but also helped me pull the whole book together. He generously hosted a workshop for authors at the University of Kansas, which served as a focal point for our efforts to integrate the disparate chapters into as coherent a whole as possible. And he provided valuable editorial suggestions to me and other contributors along the way.

I also need to thank my research assistants, Myriah Jaworksi and Janet Moon, who helped take some of the burden off my shoulders and those of contributing authors struggling to fulfill their commitments to this project while meeting other competing obligations. Chris Ramsdell,

Syracuse University's Center Coordinator, helped edit the chapters and organize the entire project. I'm fortunate to have somebody so attentive to detail and so attuned to the nuances of writing working with me. I'd also like to thank, at the MIT Press, Clay Morgan and the series editors for their faith in this project and their valuable suggestions about how to improve it.

As I write this, the end of the United States' failure to address climate change appears to be in sight. It is quite possible that not long after this book is published (or if we're slow or Congress is fast, before then), the United States Congress under a new president will begin, at long last, to seriously address climate change. But we have a long way to go. And the ideas that this book examines will remain important in shaping the ongoing and belated effort to address climate change that we hope will ensue. The scholars creating this work hope that this book will provide useful lessons for a long and serious effort to address one of the most serious environmental problems the United States, and the rest of the world, has ever faced.