



Cornwall Alliance

Background information for reporters

The [Cornwall Alliance \(CA\)](#) is a fringe US evangelical Christian group that claims there is no evidence that increased levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will cause an environmental problem.

The group, which does not disclose its funders, claims environmentalism is “[one of the greatest threats to society and the church today.](#)” The group’s [Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming](#) states: “*There is no convincing scientific evidence that human contribution to greenhouse gases is causing dangerous global warming.*”

Though it portrays itself as independent, the CA is closely tied to the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (CFACT), who are also here in Rome promoting climate science denial.

Funding

The CA is a project of the US’s “[James Partnership](#)” which does not disclose its funders. In 2012, [more than half of the James Partnership’s \\$340,0000 income](#) came through a “dark money” funding group known as Donors Trust (DT), which is exclusively and explicitly tied to conservative donors who want to give anonymously to promote “free enterprise” and low government regulation.

DT, which helps to hide the identity of donors, has been described as the “[dark money ATM](#)” of the conservative right in the US. DT and its sister organisation Donors Capital Fund (DCF) funnelled millions of dollars to groups that deny climate science or oppose laws to cut fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions. Major contributors to DT and DCF include foundations funded and controlled by the US oil billionaire Koch brothers, who are major backers of the US Republican movement.

According to [US tax records](#), about one quarter of the James Partnership’s income is spent on the salary of **Calvin Beisner**, the founder and spokesperson for the Cornwall Alliance, and who will be speaking in Rome.

Key members:

[Calvin Beisner](#) has a Ph.D in Scottish History, and is a former Professor of Social Ethics at Knox Theological Seminary. Beisner is known as a “leading evangelical climate-change skeptic”.

In 2012, Dr. Beisner [claimed the modern environmental movement](#) represents “the greatest threat to Western civilization” because it combines “the utopian vision of Marxism, the scientific facade of secular humanism, and the religious fanaticism of jihad” into a pseudo-religion that undermines Christianity. Beisner claimed the 2012 tropical

storm Sandy, which killed more than 200 people and caused billions of dollars in damages, was “[perhaps judgement](#)” from God.

In 2014, CA Scholar and advisory board member **Dr Roy Spencer**, of the University of Alabama, called on people to use the term “[global warming Nazis](#)” to describe anyone who uses the term “denier” to describe groups or people who deny the findings of large amounts of scientific literature on climate change.

The CA’s “Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming” states: “*We deny that Earth and its ecosystems are the fragile and unstable products of chance, and particularly that Earth’s climate system is vulnerable to dangerous alteration because of minuscule changes in atmospheric chemistry.*”

History



In late 2005, US evangelical leaders like [Rick Warren](#) joined a drive to back a major initiative to fight global warming, saying “millions of people could die in this century because of climate change, most of them our poorest global neighbors.”

To counter this historic shift in the evangelical community, a group called the “[Interfaith Stewardship Alliance](#)” (ISA) was launched to oppose action on carbon emissions and to deny the existence of climate change. One of the men guiding this group was Paul Driessen, a PR professional and [consultant](#) for ExxonMobil, the mining industry, and [for CFACT](#).

For “streamlining” reasons, ISA [re-launched](#) as the Cornwall Alliance in [2005](#). With the new name came a redesigned website, [highly produced](#) web videos, and an organized [network](#) of churches to distribute climate change denying propaganda to hundreds of pastors around the country. CFACT President David Rothbard has been hailed as the “[driving force](#)” behind the Cornwall Declaration public relations effort. Calvin Beisner sits on [CFACT’s Board of Advisors](#).

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