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UCI SCIENTIST TALKS TO CONGRESS

By VANJA PETROVIC

A UC Irvine researcher told a House committee Thursday that reducing black carbon emissions can have an immediate positive effect on climate change. He said that this would give the country more time to learn how to better deal with other causes.

Charles Zender, along with a panel of four other black carbon researchers, presented his findings to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

"One of the unique conclusions that this panel has shared is that black carbon presents a unique opportunity," Zender said. "It can be offset or mitigate(d) on a very quick timescale giving us perhaps a decade to struggle with more complex gas emissions, such as carbon dioxide, that our infrastructure depends on to such a critical degree."

Zender's research at UCI has focused on the effect of black carbon (combustion by-products from forest fires, smokestacks, and tailpipes) on the Arctic region. His recent paper on the effects of black carbon was published in the Journal of Geophysical Research.

Such material, known as "dirty snow," can increase Arctic warming by darkening the snow surface, allowing more heat from sunlight to be absorbed, his paper showed.

"If there were one thing that I could recommend be done differently in the next round of treaties, it would be to consider the response of the climate systems, to look at the temperature effects of each enforcing agent by sector and by timescale," he said.