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Subject: Pruitt plans to change EPA policy on scientific studies

By Alex Guillén

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EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt plans to change how the agency considers scientific information when writing regulations in a way that likely will exclude certain studies, he told the Daily Caller.

Pruitt told the news site he will reverse longtime agency policy to require that any studies used to support regulations make their raw data available for review and replication by independent scientists.

"We need to make sure their data and methodology are published as part of the record," Pruitt said. "Otherwise, it's not transparent. It's not objectively measured, and that's important."

The changes are in line with legislation that House Science Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas) has pushed for years, but which was never been passed by the Senate. Democrats, environmentalists and scientific groups have long criticized that legislation as an attempt to cherry-pick data friendly to industry from the voluminous body of epidemiological science. And EPA already releases significant amounts of this data, they said.

CBO said last year the changes "would significantly reduce the number of studies that the agency relies on." And although EPA said it could make the changes at little to no cost, CBO estimated it would spend $5 million from 2018 through 2022. EPA previously told CBO it would have to spend $250 million a year scrubbing information from thousands of studies "to ensure the transparency of information and data supporting some covered actions."

WHAT'S NEXT: Pruitt did not say when he will issue a formal directive changing EPA's science policy.

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