Reviewer's report

Title: Reframing Climate Change as a Public Health Issue: An Exploratory Study of Public Reactions

Version: 1 Date: 10 March 2010

Reviewer: John Balbus

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions

1) p. 18, 2nd para: sentence beginning “Our research not only provides” ; end of sentence doesn’t read well- should be edited.

2) p. 18, 3rd para, 4th line: delete one “that”

3) p. 7, 1st para the authors insert a parenthetical editorial comment “despite prior calls to introduce public health…”. The prior calls refer to articles published by two of the authors within the past two years. This comment adds little to the main point of a lack of empirical evidence of the benefits of public health framing that justifies the paper, and would be better omitted.

Discretionary Revisions

1) One general issue of the paper is the occasional overstating of conclusions. For example, the abstract states that a presentation pairing mitigation policies with health benefits “appears to be particularly compelling to most Americans”. Given the small size of the study and methods of recruitment, I would recommend more cautious phrasing that describes limitations of the representativeness of the sample.

2) In some places the authors rely on studies they have written for substantiating arguments in the paper. Several references used for this purpose are not peer-reviewed publications. While in many ways this reflects the small number of academic experts in this field, the weakness of the references calls into question statements that start with language like “Many leading experts in climate change communication”.

3) p. 9 although the authors describe their attempts to achieve geographic diversity, they do not present the areas represented by their subjects. It would be helpful to provide a list of states or regions and the number of subjects from each.

4) p. 9 Similarly, the authors note that subjects were recruited from three separate subpools of the United States population: travelers to (or residents of) the Washington metropolitan area, shoppers at an outlet mall, and respondents to a previous survey. While the numbers are probably too small to merit
subgroup analysis, perhaps the authors could assess the representativeness of these subpopulations compared to the US population in general in the discussion section, as well as potential differences in responses for groups approached in person versus those recruited by email.

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare I have no competing interests