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From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
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Subject: Wehrum says degree of human role in climate change an 'open question'

By Alex Guillén

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William Wehrum, the nominee to run EPA's air office, said today that the degree of human contribution to climate change is an "open question."

In response to questions from Sen. [Jeff Merkley](#), Wehrum said human activity contributes in some manner to climate change, but declined to say whether human activity is the primary driver.

"These are very complex issues and very important issues and I understand they're important to you," Wehrum added at a Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hearing before Merkley cut him off. Wehrum declined several times to answer follow-up questions, drawing the ire of Merkley, who expressed incredulity that Wehrum was not familiar enough with those issues to comment despite his lengthy history working on environmental legal issues in the private sector and at EPA.

"No one can look at what is happening on the planet and see that there is nothing happening unless you're deliberately determined to ignore that information," Merkley said. "And that makes you really quite frankly unacceptable to serve in this capacity."

WHAT'S NEXT: The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee has not yet set a date to vote on Wehrum's nomination.

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