

## **Exhibit 8**

## **DECLARATION OF STEVE KROPPER**

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I hereby declare as follows:

1. My name is Steve Kropper, and for over a decade I have been co-chair of the Massachusetts Coalition for Immigration Reform (MCIR). I was born in Needham, Massachusetts to parents with forebears who came to the U.S. between 1649 and 1893. I reside in the Boston suburbs, but have lived in Washington, D.C., Madison, Wisconsin, Ithaca and Canton, New York, as well as abroad in Scotland and Ireland. I have lived in the Boston area for a total of 50 years.

2. I hold an MBA from Cornell University and a BA from Boston University. I was in the first class of Clean Energy Fellows in the New England Clean Energy Council. Since 1979, my professional life has focused on three sectors: cleantech (energy conservation and renewables); telecommunications and wireless communication, and big data (residential real estate information). I am an entrepreneur principally responsible for raising capital, guiding product strategy, building teams, and growing new business ventures.

3. Since 1972, I have been an active member of the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Green Mountain Club, and many other environmental organizations. I serve on the Board of the Charles River Conservancy and have previously been chair of the Lexington, Massachusetts Energy Conservation Committee. In 2015, I organized GovOnTheT which enticed 75 Massachusetts Legislators to ride regional mass transit in support of system improvements. In the early 1980's, I was responsible for energy conservation for three Boston hospitals. More recently, I founded Windpole Ventures to provide specialized meteorology data to both wind farm developers and managers of the electrical grid to assist in renewable energy source integration. I served as its president from 2008 to 2012.

4. My academic training is as an economist while my graduate studies were in business. My

politics are progressive, supporting liberal causes and Democrat candidates since 1976. I recognize that the economic purpose of immigration is to depress wages. As a Democrat concerned with social justice and environmental justice, that is bad policy. On the first day of the Biden Administration, the President signed Executive Order 13990, which stated “Our Nation has an abiding commitment to empower our workers and communities...” and that it would be “the policy of my Administration to listen to the science; to improve public health and protect our environment; to ensure access to clean air and water...” to ensure environmental damage does not disproportionately harm communities of color and low income communities.”<sup>1</sup>

5. Yet when it comes to immigration, which disproportionately harms communities of color and low income communities, the Administration is tuned to the welfare of exotic peoples from abroad above our own low-income citizens. The sound science that guides the Administration’s other environmental policy goals is nowhere to be seen in immigration policy. When the American Dream of affordable housing, access to health care, a good job and education are available to **all** Americans, then we can return to our national experiment with immigration. We should not think that the country needs anything but a refreshing and modest trickle of immigration. Ending immigration is the easiest, least painful way to reduce America's footprint on the fragile global environment. Closing the gates would give our air, water and land a chance to breathe. Later if we want to change our mind about immigration, we could choose to leave our children a more crowded, polluted, land simply by reopening the welcome gates. For decades, the immigration policies of the U.S. Government have swelled population growth and directly created a serious environmental crisis. This environmental crisis only grows as the Administration lifts diverts its attention from the policies that could control

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/25/2021-01765/protecting-public-health-and-the-environment-and-restoring-science-to-tackle-the-climate-crisis>

immigration driven population growth. The Department of Homeland Security, the Department of State, and the Department of Justice have all carried out policies which encourage foreign nationals in both legal and illegal immigration.

6. When I was born in 1957, the U.S. Population was 172 million. Now it has more than doubled to over 325 million. For the last six generations, my family has reproduced at below replacement level with an average of two children per family. My grandfather had a saying that each generation has an obligation to leave the world a better place than when they arrived. Immigration is a Faustian bargain that leaves an even more crowded America to our children. Increasing population undermines the quality of life in the U.S. and further means that the America's global environmental burden also grows. In 1972, U.S. native reproduction rates stabilized—America had solved its domestic population problem. However, by opening the floodgates in 1965, immigration began to erode birthrate stabilization. Since immigrants and their children comprise all net population growth, immigration is almost squarely the source of our current population burden. It is far beyond the carrying capacity of America's water, land, and other resources.<sup>2</sup> This is even sadder because immigration's impact on population growth is largely preventable through more prudent immigration policy. Limiting immigration is the easy win in the environmental arsenal.

7. **MASSACHUSETTS** – Between 1985 and 1999, Massachusetts lost 40 acres a day to development. Though appropriations and private efforts attempt to combat this, my fellow taxpayers and private donors should not have to bear this cost. Citizens of the state have long engaged with nature, and it is part of the Bay State DNA. However, increased emissions from a growing population

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<sup>2</sup> MODERN IMMIGRATION WAVE BRINGS 59 MILLION TO U.S., DRIVING POPULATION GROWTH AND CHANGE THROUGH 2065, Pew Research Center, (2015), <https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2015/09/28/modern-immigration-wave-brings-59-million-to-u-s-driving-population-growth-and-change-through-2065/>

have caused temperature and climate changes. Temperatures are rising. In my own life, this has made the ski season (a favorite pastime of mine) in the state much more limited in duration, lesser in quality, and has caused financial strain on local ski resorts. Temperature changes have also affected the regional wineries (wine tasting is also another pastime I enjoy) and interfered with normal crop yields. Perhaps most damning, and cruel for its impact on children, however, is the huge upswing in deer ticks and poison ivy throughout the state. Deer are moving more freely in the state into regions they used to not frequent; their habitats also are now closer to developed and recreation areas than they were before. Deer bring in deer ticks which carry Lyme disease whose effects once contracted include neurological impairments, facial palsy, chronic joint inflammation, and heart rhythm irregularities.<sup>3</sup> Compounding this is the increase in poison ivy. It used to not be too much of a concern when trying to enjoy open spaces, but because of temperature changes, the plant has not only spread to new areas, but increased dramatically in density—there are many greater square miles now of poison ivy. The poison ivy itself is now more harmful.<sup>4</sup> The effects of this all? I see the direct impact all the time—I and my family are more hesitant to use the outdoors. Areas that were once great for hiking, picnicking, or walking are much more hazardous. This is profoundly sad.

8. The host of actions on immigration that the Administration has taken will make all of these effects much worse. The Administration has trumpeted more open borders and dampened immigration enforcement, and, as easily predicted, floods of foreign nationals have poured in. The continuance of these actions will result in a greater and greater effect on me, both at home in Lexington, and in the places within the U.S. that I travel and cherish.

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<sup>3</sup> LYME DISEASE, Mayo Clinic, (Jul. 2019), <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/lyme-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20374651>

<sup>4</sup> WHAT CLIMATE CHANGE FEELS LIKE: A MORE TOXIC POISON IVY, THE NEW YORK TIMES, (Dec. 2015), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/cp/climate/2015-paris-climate-talks/what-climate-change-looks-like-poison-ivy>

9. **LEXINGTON & LINCOLN** – In my communities, there has been a devastating impact on open space and quality of life because of population growth (Lexington’s population is 17% foreign born, higher than the national average). I enjoyed living in an environment with a collage of people of various socioeconomic strata; however, there is no economic diversity left in Lexington—housing has become too unaffordable for many, a result of population growth. I was an elected town meeting member that was involved in development decision making. I know firsthand the planning and economic implications of population growth. A great example, which affects me personally as a businessman, is the ballooned commute time between Lexington and downtown Boston. Time is money! In my youth it would have taken around eighteen minutes to get from Lexington to downtown Boston, now it normally takes an hour. A three-time increase in commute time means it is harder to get to Boston for commercial activities. The increased commute time is lost workweek hours and income; and the added inconvenience in attempting to conduct business downtown also has a huge opportunity cost and negative impact on productivity. I am directly losing time and money on a consistent basis.

10. **TYSON'S CORNER, VIRGINIA** – In 1986, I parked under a beautiful glade of trees before my first job interview in Tyson’s corner after completing my MBA. When I came back for the second interview, that glade of trees was gone, replaced with a building site. This proved to be a true bellwether of the time: in the DC area, and its quality of life, and been impaired by the seemingly unlimited flow of immigrants. As a regular commuter to D.C. and Tyson’s corner for business, things have gotten worse. Between breakfast and dinner, I used to be able to schedule four meetings a day in the area; now, with the hellacious traffic, I can only schedule two meetings in that same window. This is a direct loss of income and productivity.

11. **VERMONT** – I have been a longtime hiker of the Vermont's Long Trail, hiking over 272 miles of

it over the years. During my youth, I used to enjoy the ample biodiversity, specifically three species that I would see from a distance: the Timber Rattlesnake, Bald Eagle, and the Eastern Mountain Lion. Now, in my adult life, these species have *never* appeared during my months of solo and group hiking. One species gone might be a natural course, two might be a coincidence, but three is certainly symptomatic of a much greater problem. Population growth—via development or increased traffic in open spaces—has harmed the habitats of these species and my enjoyment of them. Further, there are many areas where I used to hike in Vermont that are no longer accessible because of development. It is sad that I cannot provide my children the same enjoyment of recreation species and biodiversity that I had in my youth.

12. **BIG BEND** – I have visited Big Bend National Park, located near the U.S.-Mexico border in Texas, nine times since 1980. Big Bend is deeply special to me. I have rafted, walked, cycled, and hiked the park. Big Bend is a rich yet fragile ecosystem: each sub-region has species that are uniquely adapted to the terrain, animal life, and rainfall patterns. For example, Guadalupe fescue is a short-lives grass, a perennial, which grows only at high altitude in the Chisos. On my nine visits to Big Bend, rangers have endeavored to point out signature regional mammals (such as Black Bears in the Chisos Mountains or the Mexican long-nosed bat); unfortunately, many are now considered threatened species, and I have not been able to see a single one despite my many visits over the years. The crossings by illegal immigrant labor, and an increased population, in ranching areas north of the park threaten the biodiversity of the park, as habitat is destroyed for ranching, housing and natural habitats are fragmented. This is in addition to the waste, trash, and byproducts of ranching which often find their way into the park via waterways or wind. Further, illegal immigration crosses the park directly tramples and disrupts pristine nature.

13. It also makes it dangerous as a hiker to be in these areas for fear of cartel human

smuggling. What is left is discarded trash and refuse left by the illegal crossers. This environment is supposed to be a nature preserve, not a migration highway! It has been disturbing to see the time lapse in consistent decay of the park as I return each time. This is a Federal responsibility through and through. The recent Biden Administration actions to encourage illegal border crossing have had a devastating effect on the area that surrounds Big Bend National Park and the Park itself in particular.<sup>5</sup> These days, according to reports from the Center for Immigration Studies, the Big Bend Sector in Texas has never been busier. La Linea cartel controls the area, where “foot guides” lead groups of border crossers on eight to 12 day treks with the goal of getting them to U.S. Interstate 10. *Id.* They use the cartel’s services because of “*la invitacion*,” (the invitation), the promises the Administration made to foreign nationals that if they crossed the border illegally, they should not fear deportation—promises that demoralized immigration agencies have kept, with all administrative actions which continue to encourage the flow. *Id.* Large groups of 50-100 foreign nationals each are now constantly flowing through the Big Bend Sector. Vehicles blast in from the Mexican side. *Id.* These illegal border crossers certainly are not going to be paying attention to preserving the wilderness! I would love to go back to Big Bend, but these days, I don’t know if it is safe to do so.

14. As population growth has the biggest impact on our environment, then NEPA review should be a filter through which all immigration policy must pass. The mainstream environmental movement is queasy about mixing immigration and environmental policy. But Federal law is clear that all agencies, including the immigration agencies like the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State and the Department of Justice, must analyze the environmental effects of

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<sup>5</sup> See Todd Bensman, “The Border Crisis Comes to a Once Quiet Part of Texas,” April 27, 2021, at <https://cis.org/Bensman/Border-Crisis-Comes-OnceQuiet-part-West-Texas>



their actions. These agencies' immigration policy impacts both legal and illegal migration to the U.S., which has tremendous environmental impacts, and yet they have no history of environmental review of visa programs or either official or de facto amnesty policies, which increase the settled population of the United States. Population multiplied by lifestyle externalities is the formula for environmental harm time and time again. The Administration's NEPA regulations don't even mention the effects of immigration, and they carry out immigration policies without doing any environmental assessments. If they did, my fellow environmentalists would no longer be able to bury their heads in the sand over the effects of immigration policy, and Federal policymakers might not be so eager to implement open border policies. Immigration agencies might end policies that directly undo any progress which environmental protection agencies do. Let's end conflicting environmental and immigration Executive Orders.

15. The Administration must start obeying the mandate of NEPA when it comes to immigration.

16. I hereby declare under penalty of perjury, that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 20th day of August, 2021.



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Steve Kropper