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**Center for Progressive Reform President  
Releases New Book on Climate Resilience**

*As the nation prepares to celebrate Earth Day, Rob Verchick, president of the board of the Center for Progressive Reform, launches a new, more hopeful conversation around climate change and climate resilience in new book for popular audiences*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — One morning in Miami Beach, an unexpected guest showed up in a luxury condominium complex’s parking garage: an octopus. The image quickly went viral. But the octopus — and the combination of infrastructure quirks and climate impacts that left it stranded — is more than a funny meme. It’s a potent symbol of the disruptions that a changing climate has already brought to our doorsteps and the ways we will have to adjust.

So argues Rob Verchick, president of the board of the Center for Progressive Reform, in his new book, [The Octopus in the Parking Garage](#). Verchick’s rendering of this “eight-armed alarm” begins a wide-ranging discussion about climate change that steers the conversation in a new, more hopeful direction. His take is less about how we can avoid risks we can’t manage (a driver of climate despair) but rather how to manage the risks we can’t avoid (a driver of hope and change).

Although reducing carbon dioxide emissions is essential to addressing the climate crisis, Verchick argues that we also need to adapt to address the damage we have already caused. In *Octopus*, he explores what resilience looks like on the ground, from early humans on the savannas to today’s shop owners and city planners. He takes the reader on a journey into the field: paddling through Louisiana’s bayous, hiking in one of the last refuges of Joshua trees in the Mojave Desert, and diving off Key Largo with citizen scientists working to restore coral reefs.

Engaging and accessible to the public, *The Octopus in the Parking Garage* empowers readers to address climate change and shows how we can adapt and thrive. It also emphasizes disadvantaged communities, which bear the brunt of environmental risk, arguing that building climate resilience is a necessary step toward justice.

The book is also the subject of a [live-streamed book chat](#) the Center for Progressive Reform is hosting on April 13 with Verchick and moderator and Member Scholar Emily Hammond of the George Washington University Law School.

“Even as we battle to lower emissions, we have already emitted so much planet-warming carbon pollution that there’s no avoiding significant climate-related damage,” observes U.S. Sen Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island. “That means we must step up and invest to protect ourselves from rising seas, worsening storms, more frequent floods, more intense wildfires, and all the other effects of climate upheaval — all while fighting fossil fuel emissions and disinformation. Rob Verchick has created a smart roadmap for planning for the future on a changing planet.”

Verchick is a leading climate law scholar who designed and implemented climate-resilience policies in the Obama administration’s Environmental Protection Agency and on Obama’s Interagency Climate Change Adaptation Task Force. He holds the Gauthier-St. Martin Chair in Environmental Law at Loyola University New Orleans and is a senior fellow in disaster resilience at Tulane University. He is the author of four books and host of *Connect the Dots*, a podcast produced by the Center for Progressive Reform.

As a Member Scholar at the Center for Progressive Reform, Verchick led the organization's scholarship on the government’s response to disasters in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, which he survived as a resident of New Orleans. In a [landmark report](#) and testimony before Congress, Verchick and others showed how the massive natural disaster led to a massive — but entirely preventable — unnatural disaster, with especially adverse effects on low-wealth people of color. The effort drew policymaker attention to the deep need for strong disaster planning at all levels of government as our climate changes — and amplified calls for stronger government safeguards against increasingly intense storms, floods, and wildfires.

*The Octopus in the Parking Garage* can be purchased through a variety of booksellers. You can also [register for our webinar here](#). For even more information, visit <https://robverchick.com>.

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