



Climate Madness: Obama Pledges 28% Emissions Cut To U.N.

Climate Change: President Obama's proposal to cut U.S. emissions by 28% over 10 years as America's contribution to a global climate treaty will devastate our economy while doing nothing to reduce temperatures.

The "Clean Power Plan" that the Obama administration submitted Tuesday to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change met an end-of-March deadline for contributions to a treaty in the final stages of negotiations.

But the proposal, known to climate negotiators as an Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, isn't new. Obama announced the goal of reducing emissions by 28% below 2005 levels by 2025 as part of a joint climate pledge that he made in Beijing last November with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

It remains, however, a dangerous sacrifice of U.S. progress and economic freedom on the altar of the climate change religion.

Obama hopes to achieve his pointless goal by formalizing his war on coal and truly affordable energy. The irony here is that the free market at work on private lands has produced a natural gas boom through the use of fracking on our vast domestic shale formations. It has done more to reduce so-called greenhouse gas emissions than any U.N. treaty or presidential edict.

As Patrick J. Michaels of the Cato Institute noted in a National Review article, "The EPA's own model, ironically acronymed MAGICC, estimates that its new policies will prevent a grand total of 0.018 degrees Celsius in warming by 2100. ... In fact, dropping the carbon dioxide emissions from all sources of electrical generation to zero would reduce warming by a grand total of 0.04 degrees Celsius by 2100."

That is an amount too small to either measure or sacrifice our economic growth for — even if the president's policies achieve it.

For this almost imaginary gain, much pain will be inflicted. A Heritage Foundation study predicts U.S. manufacturing job losses totaling 586,000 in just the first seven years of the Clean Power Plan. States with large manufacturing bases and heavy reliance on coal, such as Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin, would each lose at least 20,000 jobs.

The Heritage study projects that the plan will also result in "a loss of more than \$2.5 trillion (inflation-adjusted) in aggregate gross domestic product and a total income loss of more than \$7,000 (inflation-adjusted) per person." Put that lump of coal in your stocking.

Alan Carlin, former senior operations research analyst at the EPA's National Center for Environmental Economics, about whom we wrote in a 2009 "Carbongate" editorial, was fired for producing a study that documented how actual climate observations did not match climate change theories or models — and that only the politics, not the science, of climate change had been settled. That is still the case.

The current plan, Carlin contends, is also a threat to the Constitution and rule of law. "It is important to note that the EPA proposals are attempts to circumvent not only Congress and the provisions of the Clean Air Act but also the separation of powers enshrined in the U.S. Constitution," he says.

Two major lawsuits involving a dozen affected states fighting the EPA's actions are in the courts. Whether in the courts or through congressional action, this march off the climate cliff must be stopped, or more Americans will be breathing marginally cleaner air in much longer unemployment lines.