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## Bad climate bill belongs in limbo

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Will a lame duck Congress pass cap-and-trade?

Judging from recent news, it might try. But, more likely, all the sound and fury will end up signifying its usual nothing. And it leaves the preferred option, where Congress punts the problem to the EPA, very much alive.

On Aug. 10, the House of Representatives blocked a resolution from Tom Price, R-Ga., that would have prohibited the House from convening a lame duck session after November's election unless there was a national emergency.

Climate Czarina Carol Browner recently suggested that such a bill could "potentially" be passed before the 112th Congress opens for business in January. In the new Congress, the House may very well be under Republican control. Hence the need for a lame duck climate bill.

Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., also supports the ideal of the lame duck session, telling The Hill that if climate legislation isn't passed in September, "then we're going to keep pushing and maybe come back after the election and do it in a lame-duck."

Kerry and Browner are dishing out good old-fashioned Washington bunkum, pandering to the Democratic "base," and hoping to eke out a few votes from the very disappointed green left, which feels that the administration and the Senate left it out in the cold when it comes to global warming.

Despite all the protests about ceding power to Obama, it's exactly what senate Democrats want. If the Senate passes a bill, at least 60 senators would be held accountable. If EPA does the dirty work, the onus falls on only one man, Barack Obama.

Another reason that the EPA option is the most politically acceptable solution is that their proposed emissions reductions are likely to be challenged in court, and that very little that is substantive -- aside from EPA's demand for increased car and truck fuel economy -- could see the light of day for several years.

It should come as no surprise that the Sierra Club, Environment America and the Union of Concerned Scientists said their new priority on global warming was to help protect EPA from litigation. Judging from how they and their allies failed to get a cap-and-trade bill, it looks like EPA will be tied up in court for a long time.

So there you have the future of global warming. No lame duck passage of cap-and-trade. EPA, cheered on in private by the Senate, takes over emissions regulation, transferring responsibility to the president, and legal challenges keep anything expensive in limbo for the foreseeable future.

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